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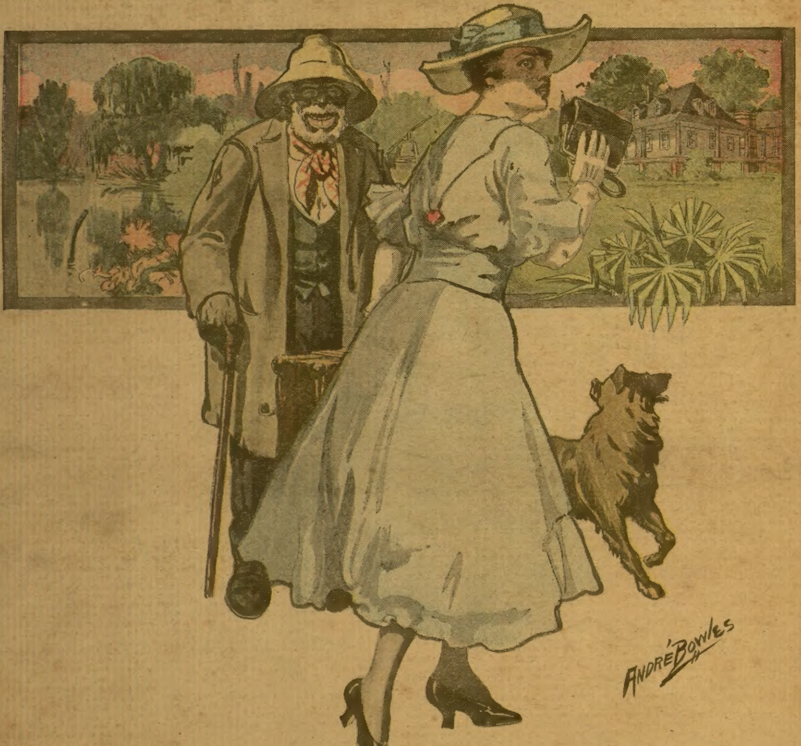

COLONEL WADE'S DAUGHTER

-:- Or, -:-

The Stolen Birthright

By Marquis James

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CHAPTER I.

THE thru train from the North was forty minutes late. The little yellow depot at Acadia, Louisiana, baked in the August heat. Old Major Roundtree dozed on his tall stool in the agent's cage. A couple of traveling salesmen nodded in the waiting-room set aside for whites, a part of the general inertia. Grips, bags, and the claptrap of travel were about them on the floor.

The negro waiting-room, adjoining but not connecting, presented a few more signs of life. Darkies from a plantation were going away on the train, and other colored folks had driven them in and remained to see them off. But the heat, which made conversation a burden, modulated the laughter and curbed the jests, even of the negroes.

Back of the depot, and on the other side of the cotton gins, stood the sparse houses of the sleepy town. A girl emerged from the shade of the oak trees in front of the City Hotel, and, carrying a heavy suitcase, hastened across the dusty common toward the station. She was breathing quickly, and not from her exertions altogether, when she put down her portmanteau before the ticket window and roused the napping Major Roundtree to life's actualities.

Blinking, the old agent beheld before this window a singularly beautiful girl. She was tall and slender, her height lending unusual grace and litheness to her figure. Her skin was almost unnaturally fair. Her lambent eyes were big and blue, and her hair—a queen's ransom of it—the hue and texture of new gold, finely spun. Une chatine, a term in the Louisiana Cajan patois, was coined to fit her type.

"How much is it to New Orleans?" the girl inquired, fingering her reticule nervously.

"Why! Bless me, Miss Patrice!" gasped the Major. "You gave me quite a start for sure! As I live, you grow prettier every day. Goin' away, might I ask?"

"What time is it, Major?" the girl broke in. "Has the four-ten gone?"

"Lordy, no, miss," responded the old agent. "It's four-thirty-five by the clock there now, but the Thirty-five, it's late today. Not due for fifteen minutes yet. But what is it that might be taking you down there this time of year?"

"Why—my father is ill," responded Patrice, in confusion. "How much does it cost?"

"You don't say! Now, I hadn't heard of that. I'm right sorry, for sure!" sympathized the Major, just a bit incredulously, wondering how such a thing could be and he not have heard of it. A great old gossip was the Major. "When did he take down, and what is ailing him?" he pressed for details. "Last I heard was that he was getting on so well he was about ready to come back. Let's see, now, Henry was telling me that just last week here. Or was it George from the plantation? No, it was Henry —been seeing quite a bit of him lately. Yes, that's who it was."

"What is the fare to New Orleans, Major? Often as I've made the trip I can't recall the amount just on the minute for the life of me. Is it two eighty-five or three twenty-five?"

"Come, now, Miss Patricey," indulged the Major, "you're right worked up about something. Didn't hear the Colonel was so bad as that."

"He's very ill, I'm afraid. How much did you say my ticket was?"

"Old trouble or something new? Newerleens, I've always heard is so bad for the fevers. I warned Henry and the Ma'm'selle not to send him there. But Newerleens, that's the Ma'm'selle's home and she would have it. But I told her. I used to go down to the carnival in my young days occasionally and I warned——"

"How much will it cost me to get there? Oh, Major, please tell me quickly! I might not have enough."

The girl's frank distress prodded the old man from his inquisitive trend.

"Two eighty-five," he replied, and then with curiosity whetted anew his eyes began to note details.

"Why, Miss Patricey, you're not much dressed up for going anywhere," he remarked pointedly. The Major craned his neck and peered questioningly thru the bars of his window at the plain tho becoming blue lawn frock Patrice wore. "Where are all those new dresses you brought back from college?"

Patrice Wade was known as the best dressed girl in the parish. The daughter of the parish's richest planter, she was entitled to be.

"Major," she reproved with a purposeful show of vexation, "this is a serious errand. I didn't have time to change. I would have missed the train as it is, if it hadn't been late. My other things are in the grip here. And, oh, if I had missed that train—I don't know what would have happened!"

The girl's words merely spurred the Major to further inquisitiveness. Fully awake now, he remarked the dust on the blue frock and the flushed face of its wearer and the hair, coming down in little strings wet with perspiration.

"Who drove you in?" he pursued.

"Oh, nobody drove me in. That is, no one from the plantation drove me in. I came with some other folks, the Bannisters. They were coming in, anyway, so I just went with them, you see, to save extra trouble. Every one at Wade Hall was so busy with the packing."

Patrice crowded closer to the window so the Major might not see her shoes, whose plight betrayed that she had walked the entire two miles from Wade Hall, her father's plantation manor, to Acadia.

"Packing? You all ain't going to move?"

"Oh, no, we're not going to move. Just making ready to go down to Pass Christian for the rest of the summer. It would be so much better for papa there. You see, I am going to meet him in New Orleans and tell him the good news."

"Looks as tho you might just drop him a letter or a telegram."

"It would be much nicer for me to surprise him, I think. Papa always liked surprises. Major, you have no idea how he is that way."

A distant whistle blast—a message from belated Thirty-five—reached the waiting-room.

"Here, Major, the money." Patrice shoved a collection of coins under the wicket. "Quick, my ticket!"

"Pullman?" asked the agent, in business-like tone.

"No, I'll just ride in the day coach."

With fumbling fingers the old Major produced the pasteboard, which the girl fairly snatched from him and dropped in her bag.

"Good-by, Major," Patrice called over her shoulder, as she gathered up her satchel and darted out on the platform. With a roar and a rush of air and the weary whistling of brakes the train drew in. The platform loungers, white and black, bestirred themselves. Acadia saw its busiest moments—its only busy moments—of the day in the hurry and scurry of embarkation and disembarkation on and off the thru train from the North

Patrice handed her suitcase to a waiting porter and tripped swiftly up the steps of the car. She was the last passenger to get aboard. She paused on the platform and surveyed the depot and its environs with a quick, searching glance. Her anxiety was puzzling. On the face of such a peaceful prospect as lay before her evident suspicions seemed absurd.

"Bo-o-i-t-t-t! Al-llaboi-t-t!" the conductor sang out.

A bell clanged and the wheels revolved. It was all over in a minute, for the thru train, already forty minutes late, had no time to dally in Acadia.

Patrice disappeared thru the door of the day coach.

Old Major Roundtree, ensconced now in his easy seat by the window, watched the observation car on Number Thirty-five dwindle away and vanish. He shook his head ominously.

"Can't fool me," he muttered sagely. "That girl wasn't telling a straight story. Keeping something back right along. Might fool some, but can't fool me. Wouldn't be a bit surprised to hear she's eloped. Been off to college and all. No saying who she has met up with. Strikes me there's plenty fit young men right here in the parish where she was born and grew up. But never tell about girls when they get her age. Can't fool me."

CHAPTER II.

PATRICE selected a seat about midway in the coach, and immediately drew down the window shade, snuggling close in the small shadow it afforded. Her predecessor in that particular chair had abandoned his copy of the Memphis News Scimitar on completing his journey. Gratefully retrieving the publication from the floor, and after making to scan an item on the front page in which she professed deep concern, Patrice unfolded the paper, presumably seeking a continuation of the article on inside columns.

All of which was a palpable sham on the face of it. Patrice had interests, but they were not in what the world was doing as interpreted thru the columns of the Memphis News Scimitar. She hugged the shadows of the blind, and deliberately employed the newspaper as a screen to conceal her lovely countenance.

Patrice was expecting some one. Tho she had not seen him board the train at Acadia—and she had taken particular pains to look—she could not be altogether certain he was not on the train. And, again, he might board it at any stop as far as Roseville, three stations down. Patrice had no means of knowing just where this particular person was.

The conductor passed thru and took up her ticket, in return placing a little green slip, with three cabalistic punch holes in it, in the little contrivance which is affixed by car windows for just that purpose. Men, more handily, carry these little badges behind their hat bands. A few more moments wore by and nothing untoward occurring, Patrice made bold to discard her paper. She opened her bag and adjusting to the proper angle a small mirror therein, she powdered her nose, frilled back the pendent strings of hair and improvised such toilet as exigencies would permit. She was not without precaution, however, and so replaced the paper.

"Summitt! Summit-tt!"

The porter thrust his head in the doorway and raucously designated the first stop after Acadia.

The train stopped and Patrice, ambushed behind her newspaper, took sly cognizance of newcomers to her coach. So far, so good. But Grafton was next and then Roseville.

Patrice still was in a state of mind, a condition not alleviated by the fact that many strange faces surrounded her. Once she glanced about for some one she might know, then instantly reproached herself for this surrender. It was necessary above all things else that she not be recognized. Better, she decided, in an emergency to appeal to a stranger, and trust to chivalry or whatever it is in a man that responds to the plea of a woman in distress.

While the girl engaged herself with these considerations a young man paused in the doorway behind her and appraised the car for unoccupied seats. Two were available. One was beside a fat man who was asleep, snoring with his mouth open; the other was next to Patrice. The young man was under no handicap in effecting a choice. He established himself next to Patrice, produced a magazine and tried to read it, but it was too dark.

"Would you mind if I put the shade up?" he ventured cordially, turning to Patrice. "I don't believe the sun will bother you on this side now."

Patrice was grateful for the opportunity to speak to some one. For the moment, however, she was undecided whether to grant the reasonable traveling request or to decline. She was trying to determine what bearing her action might have on the events of the next half-hour.

"Oh, please leave it down," she said, after a pause. "Just for a few minutes. You won't mind?"

"Certainly not," responded the young man, agreeably. "But, excuse me," he added bluntly, "you have been weeping. Won't you tell me what is the matter? Perhaps I can help you."

His startling forwardness quite disarmed the girl. She went crimson with indignation.

"Sir," she reminded severely, "you exceed even chair car propriety."

Patrice turned her back on the stranger.

"A thousand pardons!" beseeched the man. "It was not my intention to be rude. I will leave you at once. Please accept my apologies."

He reached for his satchel. Patrice turned suddenly and in her eagerness even laid her hand upon his arm.

"No, don't go," she said quickly, "Please don't go."

Something in the voice of the stranger reassured her. She desired his presence.

"Very well," rejoined the young man, with a smile. "I will remain, and thank you for the privilege. But tell me, why have you been crying?"

The pointed interrogation again. Patrice could not well send him away now.

"You are mistaken," she answered evenly. "I have not been crying."

"Pardon, but the evidence is before me," he demurred.

"You are very presumptuous, sir," the girl replied, fencing for a sharp remark. "You rather grasp at conclusions. But since your curiosity seems insatiable, I will say by way of explanation that I am a woman, traveling alone, on a very unusual errand. It will give me a sense of security and comfort to have a man with me. Need I say more? Now, please let us talk of other things."

"Aren't you running away from home?"

A little shudder possessed Patrice.

"You are making ridiculous guesses," she said, exerting every effort at self-control and succeeding fairly well.

The young man did not reply.

There, Patrice had returned thrust for thrust, and was quite satisfied with the way she had carried things off in the face of such amazing accusations from a total stranger, who, of course, really could know nothing of her affairs.

"You are making ridiculous guesses." Her own words echoed in the girl's mind as if some one else had said them.

The young man had turned to his magazine. Patrice felt steadier and surer of herself now. A person to talk to, even if an extraordinary person who said things no other person just met up with on a railroad train would say, had proved a wonderful tonic. And, strange to say, Patrice harbored no resentment because of her companion's late impertinence.

Presently she raised the window shade.

"There," she said, relenting, "if you must read."

"Thank you," responded the man, laying his book aside. "I prefer to talk."

"Grafton! Graf-ton!" called the porter.

"Oh!"

Patrice suppressed the exclamation, but hardly in time.

"Is this your destination?" solicited the man, reaching for Patrice's suitcase.

"Oh, no! This isn't my destination. I'm going to New Orleans."

The stranger regarded her earnestly for a moment.

"Sister, you are going all to pieces, that is where you are going." He said it in a brotherly way that pardoned the familiarity. "Now, please, tell me about it. It may not be so bad as you think for."

And just when she had thought she had won the day!

"Who are you? What is your name?" She asked the questions without impertinence, but with genuine consternation.

"I am just getting to that," was the response as the man sought his card case. "There——" he produced a card. "My name is Sturgis—Camden C."

Patrice read the name, and also this: "Department of Justice, New Orleans, La."

"That means you are connected with the Government, doesn't it?" she asked.

"Yes, I am an investigator."

"An investigator?" the girl repeated, noncommittally.

"Yes. A detective."

"Oh, I see."

"Never mind that, sister. I have no false whiskers concealed upon my person. The mustache you see is real."

"But I never saw a real detective before." Patrice turned eyes of frank wonderment on her companion. "I only have read of them."

"That," responded Sturgis, smiling, "indeed is a crushing blow. Must I redeem the entire race of detectives, refuting the libel of novelists of all times, before I gain your confidence?"

"Oh, no," assured Patrice, with a little laugh, "you have my confidence. And besides, the detectives I have read about were quite romantic figures—quite."

"If you have honored me with your confidence, then why won't you tell me your name?"

"Oh, excuse me, please. You're saying you are a detective awed me, and I forgot the conventional. I am Patricia Warren Wade of Wade Hall, Acadia. That is, if you will take my word for it. I have no card."

"The daughter of Colonel Singleton Wade?" asked Sturgis, in surprise.

"Yes. You know my father?"

"I have met him. A great many people know your father."

"But I wasn't aware that he knew any detectives!" Patrice countered with innocent astonishment.

"Of course, if he does, one wouldn't expect him to confess such questionable acquaintances within his home."

"That is very ungenerous of you. I didn't mean it that way at all, you know I didn't," returned Patrice, pouting. "But really," she added, surveying her companion again, "you don't look as I imagined a detective would look."

"I am not, then, in your judgment a 'romantic figure.'"

"No, you are just like anybody else—any gentleman."

"Thank you for the pretty compliment, Miss Wade."

The conversation progressed in a vein akin to repartee. The girl's remarks were light, but not carefree. Each gay sally appeared put forth as a mask to hide a soberer emotion that possessed her heart. Her smile was sweet, but not convincingly genuine.

Once or twice Sturgis endeavored to turn the conversation back to the question of her late distress. He made leading inquiries as to the occasion of her visit to New Orleans, receiving for his pains a woman's sweetly ambiguous answer. An annoying mystery disturbed our Sherlock Holmes. Unconsciously, he had engendered a keen interest in this little runaway's affairs. That she was a runaway he was certain. But the motive that would spur a daughter of Wade Hall to quit the ancestral home gave him pause.

Was it a love affair? Like old Major Roundtree, Sturgis had his suspicions.

The mystery cleared itself, however, sooner and in a much more startling manner than Mr. Camden Sturgis had anticipated.

CHAPTER III.

HALFWAY between Grafton and Roseville, a man who had boarded the train at Grafton entered the coach in which Patrice and Sturgis were chatting. The conduct of this individual already had attracted the notice of trainmen. He was engaged in a searching inspection of the faces in every car.

His mission was obvious, yet when the conductor had inquired if he were looking for any one the answer was a civil yet emphatic negative designed to remind the trainman that the affair was none of his business rather than that the reply was to be taken literally.

He was a man of 40 or thereabouts, tall, stalwart, decisive and fastidiously groomed in linens. With his black hair, shot with gray at the temples, his hard, dark eyes and commanding bearing, he was a man aptly described as striking; a man to engage the second glance of any stranger.

In the rear doorway of the coach he paused, his sharp survey traveling first to one set of head and shoulders, then to another. He raised his chin a bit and his lips parted in surprise as his gaze fell upon Patrice. He passed down the aisle to the front of the car to obtain a surer view. Henri Thibidoux was not the man to involve himself in such a contretemps as a mistaken identity episode.

Patrice recognized him as he passed. A sentence unfinished perished on her lips. A chill swept her spine and froze there. She clutched Sturgis by the arm.

The newcomer reached the front of the car, paused and turned about. His piercing stare sought the terrorized Patrice. With a grim smile on his lips he advanced toward her.

"Help me, please!" the girl gasped in a frightened half-whisper. "Protect me from that man!"

Words could not have amplified the urgency, the desperation of that brief appeal. Thibidoux hesitated beside the chairs occupied by Patrice and Sturgis.

"Patrice," he said, "come with me."

The remark, to all intents, was casual—as tho he might have been asking a guest in his own home to step into an adjoining room. There was firmness, but no hint of command in his tone.

The girl was white and speechless. Thibidoux, her stepmother's brother, fingered his watch chain and waited one, maybe two minutes. Then he said: "Come! Avoid scenes. Let us repair to the next car."

His tone was crisp and confidential, but imperative now. Patrice knew she must answer. She glanced at Sturgis for inspiration and got it.

"There need be no scene, Henri," she replied quietly. "I shall remain here—with Mr. Sturgis."

"Ah! To Mr. Sturgis I have been denied the singular pleasure of an intro-

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duction," exclaimed Thibidoux, elevating his brows as if only that instant aware of Stugis' presence. Yet there was nothing intentionally theatric in his manner. His ceremoniousness of speech and profusion of gesture were indigenous with his Creole origin.

"Then allow me to present Mr. Camden Sturgis, a gentleman of New Orleans. Mr. Sturgis, Mr. Henri Thibidoux, also of New Orleans."

The two men bowed stiffly, Sturgis without rising. Sturgis had heard of the old Thibidoux family of New Orleans, and from the appearance of Henri did not doubt that he was a member of that distinguished line.

"Mr. Sturgis is an old friend of mine," continued Patrice, "and in this case, if need be, my protector."

It was a plain challenge. Sturgis was taken back a bit by the girl's words. She was getting him into deep water. Thibidoux, however, took no notice of them.

"The comedy now having been enacted," he recited sarcastically, "quite to the satisfaction of yourself, even if somewhat to the discomfiture of your old friend, Mr. Sturgis, here, we will ring down the curtain. Patrice, you will come with me—by Mr. Sturgis' leave, of course."

Thibidoux forthwith forced the detective's hand. He reached for the girl's satchel. Sturgis frustrated that coup by placing the grip out of arm's reach.

"Not now," he intruded. "Miss Wade, I should think, had made sufficiently plain her desire to remain here. If you will find a seat somewhere in the car, we three can meet in New Orleans and resume this discussion to better advantage privately, I believe."

Thibidoux was too artful a man to give way to a display of temper.

"You presume too much," he returned coolly. "I am not going to New Orleans; neither is Miss Wade. We leave the train at Roseville, from where this runaway girl will be returned to her home where she belongs. Stand aside, if you please, sir, and let the young lady pass."

But Patrice evinced no disposition to stir from her seat. Sturgis, led in too far for honorable retreat, played his high card.

"We will end this controversy, here," said he, drawing aside his coat lapel and displaying the badge of office on his vest. "Miss Wade is in my custody and will proceed with me to New Orleans. That, I trust, is sufficient."

The effect was somewhat electrical. But no matter what Thibidoux's surmises were his face did not betray them. It was inscrutable. Always a mask, it remained one. There was, however, something in the stranger's quiet reserve that caused Henri to abandon his high-handed procedure. There appeared to be a perfect understanding between Patrice and the secret service man. What did it mean?

Without further inquiry as to Sturgis' status, Thibidoux tactfully withdrew.

"Very well, Mr. Sturgis," he acquiesced, "I shall meet you in New Orleans. Anything to save the young lady from further embarrassment. Will you name the rendezvous?"

"At the Monteleone Hotel at eight o'clock. The train arrives at seven-thirty."

"At the Monteleone at eight," intoned Thibidoux. He turned precipitously and passed out of the car, followed by a wake of curious eyes.

Henri Thibidoux dropped into a seat beside a small black-eyed man who shared his Pullman section. The small man's face was animated and his eyes asked the question: "What news?"

Thibidoux, however, said nothing. He gave no sign that he was aware even of his companion's presence. The small man appeared highly nervous, in sharp contrast to Thibidoux's unruffled preoccupation. He fidgeted about in his seat, exhibiting various signs of uneasiness, yet held his tongue, eying Thibidoux keenly the while.

Henri remained impressively silent. Patrice and her secret service escort must never reach the Monteleone together. But how was this to be averted?

CHAPTER IV.

PATRICE turned to watch Thibidoux's resentful shoulders disappear thru the door of the coach. When sure he was actually out of sight, and the menace of his presence removed—temporarily, at least—she turned to Sturgis with a simple sentence of gratitude upon her lips. The words were never uttered. Patrice choked and with an inarticulate little cry fainted in the secret service man's arms. The girl's physical reserve, called to arms in the crisis, had deserted her, now that the trying ordeal was past.

Sturgis understood the situation. Waving aside a couple of flustered passengers, he busied himself to relieve the unconscious girl. He lifted her straight in her chair, and composed her head against a pillow a porter had brought to him, together with a tumbler of water. With a dampened handkerchief he sent the hot blood from Patrice's throbbing temples. She began to arouse from her state of coma. A few swallows of water and she was herself again, none the worse for her sudden faint.

Sturgis led her into the forward coach that she might escape the curious eyes of those who had witnessed the episode of the encounter with Thibidoux. Comfortably settled amid their new surroundings, Patrice voiced her belated gratitude tritely.

"How can I thank you?" she said.

"Don't try," said Sturgis. "Just tell me what all this is about. I must be possessed with at least a working knowledge of the situation if I am to try conclusions with this fellow again. And besides, I am a trifle curious to know what I have walked into."

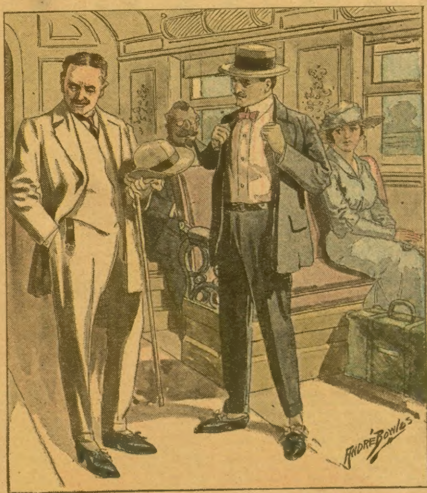
Sturgis was quite serious. He had gone far simply on the word of a strange young woman. Patrice realized it, too.

"I shall tell you all," the girl said quietly. "But oh, I do want you to help me a little longer! I have gone too far now to turn back. I've burned the bridges behind me."

"I shall answer for your safety," assured Sturgis, with matter-of-fact gallantry. "But the story."

Patrice's narrative began properly with her birth at Wade Hall, that famed old Louisiana manor, the mention of which for generations had been an interchangeable term with Southern hospitality and full-handedness. As Patrice—the last of the Wades—progressed with her story, carried on by the flood-tide of retrospection, Sturgis sat fascinated by the romanticism which the manners and people of the South hold for one lately arrived from the materialistic North. He found himself picturing on the enchanted canvas of his imagination the broad halls and spacious rooms of Wade Hall, graced by the beauty and chivalry of the Old South—an epoch which exists now only in the memory of grand dames and old men.

Patrice harked back to her earliest recollections—the nursery, the beautiful things she had to play with; Chloe, her black mammy; her mother and the familiar scenes about the old plantation. Her father was absent most of the time, but his frequent visits to Wade Hall were memorable occasions. He was a several-times-a-year Santa Claus. Colonel Singleton Wade had expanded the ancestral enterprise of Wade Hall, cotton planting, and was in New Orleans on the exchange most of the time.



"We will end this controversy here."

Then—and Patrice's voice grew wonderfully soft and liquid, her listener thought—came her mother's illness and death and her father's sorrow. Wade Hall was in the shadow of its first great grief of the generation. The little girl could not understand it all. The house seemed so big and quiet.

Business called father back to New Orleans and during the bleak days of Louisiana's short winter Patrice would spend hours with her face pressed tight against the window-pane, gazing down the road, waiting for the confidently expected return of the mamma who had "gone away." Old Chloe would discover her there, take the child upon her generous calico lap and endeavor to explain that which wiser heads than hers have failed to make clear.

Early spring and Louisiana abloom banished the griefs of the little miss of Wade Hall. There was life out of doors and exchanged visits with the children of neighboring plantations. Patrice was happy again.

Thus the next few years passed. One day Colonel Wade, addressing his daughter, said:

"Patrice is a big girl now, past six, and she must have a governess and begin her lessons and music."

This omened a change, and Patrice was quite satisfied with things as they were. Childlike, she protested.

"But Patrice must not grow up ignorant," argued her father. "I want her to be a fine lady and a credit to Wade Hall, as her mother was."

Could a governess make her like her mother? If so, Patrice would eagerly greet this new person.

The next time Colonel Wade returned from New Orleans, there accompanied him Ma'm'selle, the new governess.

Her name was Eloise Thibidoux, but Patrice called her Ma'm'selle from the first. Her father had carefully explained the great good fostune of obtaining Ma'm'selle to sponsor his child's bringing up. No ordinary governess she, but a Thibidoux, of the ancient and aristocratic Creole family of that name. It was not due to the impoverished state of her house, but because of her high personal regard for the master of Wade Hall, that Ma'm'selle consented to take in hand Patrice's academic and social education. That was distinctly understood.

However impoverished, a Thibidoux would never work—and acknowledged it. But several times the family fortunes had ebbed so low that a Thibidoux had been prevailed upon to perform a service—merely as a mark of esteem to the one accommodated, of course.

Her status thus being made quite clear, Ma'm'selle established herself at Wade Hall, and took Patrice in hand. She began with a, b, c's, and as matters progressed, started her pupil in French—first by teaching the French equivalents at table and withholding food unless it were asked for properly in the language. Then came music, and the drawing-room of Wade Hall, which had been closed since the death of Patrice's mother, was opened and the cover removed from the piano.

For all her vouched attainments, Patrice disliked Ma'm'selle from the start. She was French, and dark and temperamental—just the opposite of the little girl's mother. She lacked the infinite patience which marks the mother or the successful teacher. When her small pupil was slow to assimilate ideas or unable to pronounce those perplexing French words just as a Parisian would, she would fly into transports of exasperation and pinch the arms of her ward until they were blue. She would lock Patrice in the parlor for hours, forcing her to practice a difficult exercise on the piano, and frequently she sent the child supperless to bed.

But Patrice soon learned that whenever her father was at home, Ma'm'selle was a different person. In the presence of Colonel Wade, the new governess was all consideration, all solicitude toward Patrice, taking unbounded pride in the exhibition of the child's progress in her French, her music, her studies and other beaux arts. The father, of course, was delighted. So cleverly was all this transacted that when Patrice did see her father alone, her complaints against Ma'm'selle seemed wholly refuted by the facts. The busy parent dismissed them as the groundless imaginings of a child.

Patrice's one refuge, the one repository for her woes, her only unfailing sanctuary of comfort, was dear old black Chloe. But the watchful Ma'm'selle soon eliminated poor Chloe. Upon the pretext that the association of "that illiterate negress" was having a deleterious effect upon the child's budding education, that saintly old soul was banished from the household to the field hands' quarters. Born to a place in the "big house," she did not long survive her disgrace. Chloe died of a broken heart—a loss Patrice felt even more poignantly than she had that of her mother.

Ma'm'selle became mistress of Wade Hall in fact long before she did in name. And the propitious time having arrived, Eloise Thibidoux set about quickly to complete her conquest. She was a strikingly beautiful woman, endowed with all those thousand little graces which so swiftly and inevitably ensnare and subdue a man. An indefinable clairvoyance of demeanor, a natural born-to-rule air of superiority was hers—a conscious weapon to use as she chose.

The Colonel's visits home came at shorter intervals. Long after she had been sent away to bed, Patrice would hear the voices of her father and Ma'm'selle downstairs. Many are the times the girl cried herself to sleep to the music of an old French love song, by which Eloise Thibidoux was enticing the master of Wade Hall further and further into the net of her own skilful weaving and spreading.

Ma'm'selle had been four years at Wade Hall when one morning Patrice was awakened by her father's kiss. He seated himself on the side of the bed.

"How would you like," he asked confidentially, "to have Ma'm'selle Eloise for your mamma?"

"Ugh, papa!" protested the girl, with undisguised repugnance. "I wouldn't like her for a mamma! I don't like her at all!"

Patrice was startled by the strange, injured look her words brought to her father's face.

"But maybe you would like her better if she were your real mamma," the Colonel ventured. "Why, she loves you as if you were her own daughter. I'm sure she couldn't have been so considerate of your welfare without a deep affection. She's tried to be a real mother to you for the last four years. Surely my little girl isn't one to be ungrateful."

Patrice shook her head dumbly, too puzzled for words.

"Every little girl must have a mamma," her father continued. "It has been a long time since you had a real mamma, but you are to have one tomorrow. I have decided to make Ma'm'selle your mamma."

"Oh, papa!"

The genuineness of his daughter's anguish must have touched Colonel Wade, for he kissed her hurriedly and left her to her tears.

Colonel Wade and his bride went East on a long journey. One of the negro women was assigned to look after Patrice, whose happiness was reclaimed on the departure of Ma'm'selle.

She received almost daily letters from her father, which always were burdened with the effusive manifestations of love from her "new mamma." These assurances seemed so sincere, Patrice eagerly awaited their return; she wondered if Ma'm'selle could have experienced a change of heart. After the honeymoon Ma'm'selle was all that a "real mother" could be—for a fortnight—until the Colonel went to New Orleans. Then she was the same child-hating Ma'm'selle. Patrice could not live with her, the stepmother decreed, but must go to a convent.

Convents are the terror of some little girls' hearts, but Patrice welcomed the prospect. Anything to escape Ma'm'selle. It was hopeless.

Four years she spent at the convent of the Sacred Heart, in New Orleans, and they were not unpleasant years. The sisters were so different from Ma'm'selle; and many of them were French, too, two circumstances Patrice found it hard to reconcile at first. Then Patrice was ready for college, and four more years were spent in New Orleans, at Newcomb, with fewer restrictions.

After graduation in the June preceding the August when this account begins, Patrice returned to Wade Hall. She did this despite the fact that the Ma'm'selle, in a sudden reversal of attitude toward her stepdaughter, had discovered Patrice possessed of remarkable artistic talents and recommended that she go to Paris at once after graduation from Newcomb. Ma'm'selle's ambition to see Patrice in Paris appeared almost too ardent to be without a motive. Patrice's immediate reason for returning to Wade Hall, however, was the grave misgivings she entertained as to the state of her father's health.

While he had sought every artifice to shield it from her, Patrice had known that for years her father and his second wife were not congenial. At first she accompanied him during his sojourns in New Orleans. Now they virtually lived apart. They had quarreled because Ma'm'selle had advanced large sums to her brother and had paid his gambling losses. Henri, as cultivated and as polished as his designing sister, lived at cards and by his wits for borrowing after his inherited fortune was run thru.

The possibility that Henri and Eloise were in league for the sole purpose of despoiling Colonel Wade of his fortune had recurred to Patrice with annoying frequency. She had not heard, even indirectly, from her father since the month previous to graduation, and then a note from Ma'm'selle informed her that he was ill and in a sanitarium in the city and would be unable to attend commencement. Altogether, matters looked far from right when Patrice established herself at Wade Hall.

Henri and Ma'm'selle were there, and Henri appeared to be running the place. Their greeting was cordial, but remained so only until Patrice announced that she had determined to delay action indefinitely upon Ma'm'selle's suggestion that she go to Paris and take up art. At once Henri and his sister affected an air of cool reserve. It was a peculiar situation. Patrice's presence in her own home—the house in which she was born—was resented by two interlopers who had been squandering her birthright for years, and who, tired of stealing it piecemeal, planned to take it in the lump.

With infinite finesse they played their parts. Patrice's questions concerning her father were answered with the most guarded evasion. The girl could not even find out where her parent was, and her only enlightenment on his condition after half a dozen interviews was that he was suffering from a breakdown and must be kept in seclusion. Patrice's anxiety became fear. Ma'm'selle and Henri deported themselves mysteriously. The atmosphere was surcharged with plot. There were whispered conferences behind locked doors of rooms Henri and Eloise reserved for themselves, giving audience to mysterious strangers who visited the plantation only under cover of night.

Only once did Patrice's alert ears catch a name. One nightly arrival, a dark little man, had been addressed as "Doctor Binot."

Henri absented himself frequently from the plantation, and would be gone often for days at a time. There was something in the wind.

Just what this something was disclosed itself sooner than Patrice had reckoned for. One day she picked up a letter which had fallen from one of Henri's pockets. The epistle bared an appalling state of affairs. To quit the plantation undetected—which she did—required subterfuge. Patrice found it necessary to walk two miles to Acadia under the merciless August sun.

Even then she would have missed the train had it been on time. But that step negotiated without interference, she faced a new trial. Her absence surely would be discovered, whereupon Ma'm'selle would communicate at once by telephone with Henri, who that day happened to be in one of the towns on the railroad just down the line.

"And, as I expected, he was apprised of my escape, and he boarded the train and attempted to take me back. But that is where you came in," said Patrice, concluding her story. "And now, here is the letter which I found."

She produced a paper from her bag and handed it to Sturgis.

"Why," exclaimed Camden, "it's written in French."

"Yes. I never thought of that. Perhaps you don't read it, for you're Northern, aren't you?"

"I admit the impeachment of being a Yankee, but it was my excellent Princeton French," replied the detective airily, "that won me my assignment to the New Orleans office."

Sturgis scanned the letter. It was written from New Orleans and addressed to Henri at Wade Hall. Translated, it read:

> "At last I have the old man lodged away, all according to plans. Everything went off without the slightest hitch. Henri, you are a wonderful schemer! Of course, he protested some, but my persuasion prevailed. The old fool still loves me! Your presence wasn't needed, and as you said, it might have aroused suspicions.
>
> "He thinks he is in a sanitarium and suspects nothing. The 'medicine' is doing its work beautifully; I really do not believe he is in his right mind half of the time. We are fortunate in having Binot as the 'doctor in charge.' He lends the proper, genuine touch. Besides, since he is a registered physician, he can issue the death certificate. Binot gives him only two months to live, but says we must not hurry matters.
>
> "I must remain here for some days; the old man exacted that promise from me. It now remains only to advance plausible excuses to the girl for his absence at graduation—and to wait.
>
> "But that is easy. And if we only can get the girl to Europe—ah, Henri, you are a man of ideas! Au revoir. ELOISE."

Sturgis folded the paper slowly and returned it to the girl.

"Now do you wonder why I am going to my father with all possible speed?" asked Patrice.

"Hmm!" the detective observed, not hearing the question. "This is a pretty howdy-do, isn't it?"

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this interesting story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

HIS PIRATE CREW

-:- Or, -:-

Law in the Cabin

By Victor Ardmore

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CHAPTER IV.

THE sea was wrinkling merrily under a benign sun, with spangles of white and silver on its field of blue, a vast reach unbroken save where a ship was making its way, sending the water back along its keel in singing uplifts and breaking bubbles that hailed the lone traveler like friendly comrades.

The ship was a full-rigger, long and graceful, with bows that were poetry in handicraft and channels to delight the eye, a thing trim and dainty, tho plainly unusually strong from outer shell to every treenailed inward joint, and the builder could have told of the care given to each stringer from the port-sill to the plank-sheer, with sturdy timbers from keel to rung-heads, and the nicety of scarfing, coaking and faying, a small part of the whole. And above all were masts slender but strong, and sails white with youth and good material.

This was the ship Lively Lucy, of which Peter Gladden was charterer and Ambrose G. Salter the capable captain—for the grim crew had signed the articles before the notary without mishap to themselves.

She was four days out of San Francisco, headed for the heart of the Pacific, bound in search of the islands so dear to Mr. Gladden's imagination. Nobody grumbled in the Lively Lucy, for she was that most desirable of all deep-sea craft, a well-found ship. Only the best of food was served from the galley, and the critical foremast hands ate and were glad.

The passengers were few, for the charterer had found that nearly all his friends were too busy making money to take a pleasure voyage, so, besides himself, there were only his daughters, Eveline and Agatha, and a young man, Stanley Lake, plus Gladden's business associates, Luke Pearson and Horatio Marx. It was, perhaps, odd that Mr. Lake had left a good business to take care of itself simply because he liked to look at Agatha and hear her speak, but he was young.

It was five bells in the forenoon watch, and while Second Mate Wilkinson paced and watched sea and sails, the cabin party were gathered aft enjoying the excellent weather. There had been lively talk among the young folks, but Lake suddenly became aware that Eveline was not taking part in it.

"Still centering your mind on Captain Salter?" he asked lightly.

"Why did you think that?" she asked.

"You watched him closely when he went below, ten minutes ago, and you've not spoken since."

"Eveline is much taken with the Captain," Agatha added mischievously.

"I admit," was the reply, "that I am still unable to give him the admiration I feel for Columbus. Our skipper may be all that father credits him with being, and that he is a good sailor seems to be certain, but that something in his face puzzles me."

"Meaning?"

"Oh! I've told you before. Seems to me he is a double kind of a person. He is always courteous and thoughtful of our comfort, and smiles often, but that impression that there is something hidden in his eyes and mouth won't leave me. Now, don't joke about it, but what I want to know is, what's hidden there?"

"Too deep a problem for me!" Lake exclaimed.

"And Salter is too deep for me. The other day father was telling me how he admired his sailors, and added that they came well recommended by their leader, and I asked him who recommended Salter. Fact is, we know nothing at all about him. I dare say he is all right, but——"

"You don't like him."

"Frankly, I can't like him. Don't ask me why, for I can't tell. It is just that vague impression that he isn't such a fine sea-dog as father thinks. For that matter," she impulsively added, "I can't say I admire the rest of the crew he brought along. Surly Haggett and the sailors somehow repel me."

"I suppose that doesn't include Benny Chain and Asa Striker?"

"Oh, no, for I said those Salter brought with him. The other two men were father's selection, and he has known Benny for years, often going out fishing with him."

"Striker is a man above his calling, I should say. He looks intelligent, and speaks in the way of an educated man. A case of being down in luck, I dare say."

Lake paused, smiled and added carelessly:

"Anyhow, everybody agrees that we have a smart crew, and that is the main thing. We needn't care a rap whether Salter and his fellows are Sunday-school graduates or not."

The decision seemed to be logical, but men sometimes make errors when analyzing conditions.

Mate Wilkinson came near and paused close by them. He was a fine-looking young man, and, by his own request, mention was not made that he was Eveline's chosen lover. True, her father had stated that fact to Salter, but Noel was anxious to keep it from the foremast hands, feeling that he would command less respect from them if they believed he "had come in thru the cabin window," as the expression went.

"Do you know," he now asked, "that California is falling far astern?"

"Blame that upon the Lively Lucy!" said Eveline, laughing.

"The old hooker is certainly pawing along splendidly. She's going ten knots now, and tho wind is not built for fast sending. At this rate we shall make a runaway voyage of it."

"We need to if we survey all the islands in the Pacific."

"Our task is hardly so formidable as that, but we are bound to get some land or other under our forefoot before long. Captain Salter has Big Pelican Island in mind, I understand."

"I can already see the whalers trying out oil there," said Agatha, with something like derision in her tones.

"We are likely to discover each other there, first. The Lucy will see to that. She's bound that way, and where she heads she's sure to arrive."

"You haven't tried her in a gale yet," suggested Eveline.

"Trust her in any weather. Yes, and I think I may add, trust her crew. They are smart fellows, all typical seamen——"

The mate paused, looked forward, and then added slowly:

"All but Asa Striker. He's as good a man at ship duty as any here, but hardly the sort I've just named. He really is either an educated man or he has a remarkable faculty for imitating others."

"Do you know, we were speaking of him in the same way only a few minutes ago. What do you make of him?"

"No more than what I've indicated. I've tried in a roundabout way to make him talk of himself, but he skilfully but courteously evades my efforts. Seems to me he should either be using his unusual intelligence ashore or commanding a ship. He has too much brain power for the forecastle. Striker is a mystery!"

"We must expect mysteries in so strange a voyage as this," said the plain-spoken Agatha.

"You will find them all small ones," Lake returned confidently.

Perhaps he would not have been so confident had he known all the preliminaries of the voyage, nor had he been present at an interview beginning at the same moment in Captain Salter's stateroom. That man had been sitting very quiet, wholly bound up in a book he was perusing, when Mate Haggett entered. Even that occurrence did not bring him back to conscious life, but the intruder was not inclined to humor this mental abstraction. Having waited a moment he spoke irritably.

"Well?"

The Captain looked up.

"Oh! So it's you?" he returned.

"I should say it was, but it might have been a warship and you wouldn't have known it. Confound that eternal book!"

"Don't speak that way of this admirable volume!" cautioned the skipper. "Its pages are meat and honey to the thirsty mind. The original Ambrose G. Salter was a fool to leave the book behind when he ran away to the gold fields. Think what rich reading matter it would be for him after his daily labors with pick and cradle. The laws of this young commonwealth! Legal procedures and penalties without limit. As versatile as a woman's cookbook, but far more edifying. It keenly reminds me of the days when I was a lawyer's clerk in the State of—well, no matter where."

"Will you drop such nonsense?" growled Haggett.

"No, Haggett. No more than I would drop this volume. And the book has bred an itch in me. Why, man, I almost regret that I deserted the law. A spell is on me, and I'm feasting on statutes."

"Blackington, I'm here on business, and I'll listen to no more of such idle talk. Hear me!"

"Two cautions first," returned the Captain, lazily. "A subordinate officer is supposed to pay respect to his superior. Pass that by. But don't speak the name Blackington here."

"Are you ashamed of your name?"

"My name is Ambrose G. Salter, notary public, tho also an expert sea commander. Now, proceed!"

"Well, Captain, some of the hands have been talking with me, and they are impatient to seize this ship and be done with it. We are already so far from the track of sea commerce that we rarely sight another craft, and it would be perfectly safe to strike now. Why not do it? Seize the ship, toss Gladden and his friends overboard, and then shift our helm and run north and capture a merchant vessel. In brief, get busy!"

"Later, later!"

"But, Captain——"

"Didn't I say later?"

"You did, and I say that you've lost all your snap. The only thing you are interested in is reading that dry-as-dust book, and you've turned into a milksop!"

Salter's face had been gradually hardening, and he now took on a tigerish expression that led Haggett to fall back a step.

"That will do!" he returned curtly. "I'll have no more of such talk to me. I am captain of this ship, and when I'm captain no other man can command nor criticise in ill temper. Get back to your kennel, dog, and stay there, for if you cut up ugly I'll pass a cutlass thru you and pitch you to the fishes. You know Blackington's way!"

The mate fell back farther.

"All right, sir," he answered hurriedly. "I was only suggesting something in a friendly way, and I'm sorry if I gave offense. As you say, you are captain, and no man of your crew will forget that. We all know, too, that your plans are always best. That's all, sir."

Haggett wound up, bobbed his head deferentially, and left the room. Salter had not given him another word, but the mate was confident that his offense would be overlooked later. He knew he had gone too far. Blackington had a way of jesting with his men when so disposed, but when he became serious and showed the savage side of him, nobody had the temerity to oppose him. Humbled, the mate hastened to his own room.

While he went the men of his watch were in the forecastle. With a single exception all hands were gathered at its extremity, where one of their number was showing tricks with cards. The exception was Asa Striker. He was by himself, overhauling his chest a trifle. In doing this he unexpectedly came upon a white pocket handkerchief which had been mixed in with other articles.

He looked at it oddly, admitting that it was inappropriate for a sailor, and was about to toss it back when something else attracted his attention. A name was stenciled in a corner.

"Ambrose G. Salter."

He saw, started, and abruptly thrust the telltale object away.

"My name!" he muttered. "If others find it they may suspect——"

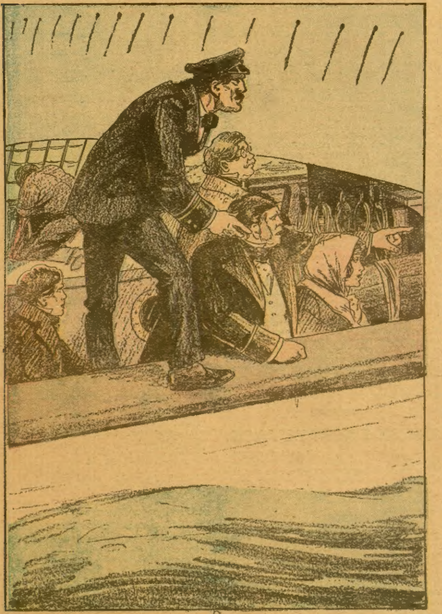
Hesitating, he took the handkerchief again, rolled it in a bit of iron he had before noticed on the floor, and tied the ends. It was in his mind to fling it overboard, thus weighted, at the first opportnnity. Plainly, education was not the only peculiarity of this forecastle hand.

And this was the ship in which worthy Mr. Gladden and his friends were bound for the remote seas. A mysterious sailor was possibly of little consequence, but what about a pirate crew led by the infamous Blackington?

CHAPTER V.

SEVERAL days passed without important events, as far as any one person could see, but the strange elements in the ship were never asleep. Mr. Gladden was always thinking about his absorbing plans, and Pearson and Mark were equally devoted to the idea and far more enthusiastic, while the young people talked folly and the ship was sent steadily on her way.

In the privacy of his stateroom Captain Salter read his book of laws, and



Off the starboard quarter a ship lay like a smudge.

was more than ever bound up in it, but never sufficiently to loosen hold on his fellow pirates. He had given them imperious orders not to betray the villainy in their natures to any one by word or act, and, as far as outward appearances went, the Lively Lucy might be carrying as honest a lot of mariners as sailed the Pacific.

Meanwhile, they drew near to the first of the islands they were to visit and consider for the whaling base nearest land. Salter explained as he stood with Mr. Gladden in the weather side of the ship.

"If the old hooker keeps up this gait we ought to raise Big Pelican Island by another nightfall," he said.

"That will enable us to begin work by the morning after," the merchant added.

"Yes, sir."

"How long will it take?"

"Depends upon how thoro you want to be. Half a day would do for a rather good survey, but a full day is bound to bring more enlightenment."

"An island partly level and partly rock-ridged?"

"Yes, sir."

"I am glad you know these islands so well, tho I don't just see how you acquired all your information," Gladden admitted.

"Oh!" replied Salter, modestly, "I have sailed the Pacific a great deal as boy and man. I've been at it ever since I was 12 years old, except that, for a few years, I yielded to the pleas of my mother and took up a shore calling temporarily. When the good woman died I returned to the sea. Not to boast, but as a matter of business, few men know this ocean better than I."

"Salter, I consider myself most fortunate in having met and engaged you for this voyage!" declared the merchant, with unusual feeling.

"At least, you have an experienced sailor."

"Do you never boast, Captain?"

"Why should I?"

"Why do other men do it? Why do they revel in praising themselves?"

"Well, well," returned the modest mariner, "I dare say it is natural to some, but does it make them a bit the more capable? Hardly!"

"You prefer to be known by your deeds?" and Gladden smiled in a very friendly way.

"Well—er!—that is the final mark chalked up to the credit or discredit of every man living."

Five minutes later, when the Captain had gone below to delve into the wisdom of the laws of California, Gladden spoke in a hushed voice to Horatio Marx.

"The knowledge grows upon me daily that our shipmaster is a remarkable man. Modest, capable, alert, quietly masterful and honest, he is just the man we wanted for this trip of ours."

It was then seven bells in the second dogwatch. A little later a thin fog began to settle, and by the time the night was fully at hand the ship was blanketed by a gray-black outboard that was not to be pierced by the human eye. No attention was given to this, for sea-room was abundant, and with proper precautions taken against collision with other vessels, the Lively Lucy drove along with the water hissing past her hull, a gallant beauty of the deep.

Morning found conditions but little changed, but the least expert of the party could have seen that the fog was lifting with the coming of the sun, and the cabin force had breakfast in good spirits. Even a harmless fog is depressing at sea after the first hour of its novelty, peculiar to the locality.

"Another delightful day," said Agatha, gayly, as the final bites were disposed of before them.

"And Big Pelican by nightfall," added Mr. Gladden.

"Only water between," supplemented Pearson, stupidly.

"Or a chance ship off our hull to look at," suggested Eveline.

"A ship!" scoffed Agatha. "Why, we haven't seen one in three days. Captain Salter, it doesn't satisfy me for you to explain that we are out of the trade routes. I maintain that seagoers should have amusement, and that, if need be, vessels should be sent out to give variety to the human eye, just as people are amused on land."

"We will send word for one," cried Marx.

"Why not? Walking is good, and——"

The words died away as a deep sound rolled over the sea. Salter came to his feet with a bound.

"A cannon!" exclaimed Eveline.

"Somebody aimed at us, too. I heard the plunge of the ball."

"Captain, is it a warship or pirates?"

There was no reply. The skipper was moving from the cabin with long steps, and after questioning looks at one another the passengers followed. Pearson's blunt question had stirred up sudden uneasiness, and view of the outlying sea was desired by all.

It was found that during the time spent at table the clearing process had been going on rapidly. The mist had lifted, so that the sea was visible for a long distance, and Haggett's pointing finger told them where to look.

Well off the starboard quarter a ship lay like a smudge in the mist, her bows pointing toward the Lively Lucy, and moving dots on her deck told of the presence of numerous men. Salter snatched a glass from Haggett and looked hard.

"What do you make of her, Captain?" asked Gladden, after a pause.

"Hard to say," was the curt response.

"Don't I see guns aboard of her?" asked Eveline.

"Guns are there," Salter admitted.

"That means she is one of two things," added Pearson. "Warship or pirate—which?"

"Not a warship," declared Stanley Lake, who had been using his private glass. "I feel sure I could make out our flag, if it was there."

"The fog will soon give us good view."

"Too much!" said Marx, dryly.

Salter wheeled upon Haggett sharply.

"Crack on!" he ordered briskly. "Give her all the canvas she will carry. Pack the yards!"

"Captain," Eveline asked, "is she really a pirate?"

"Give me ten minutes for my answer!" was the brief reply.

That ten minutes was a busy time in the ship. Haggett bellowed his orders and the men swarmed aloft to shake out all the furled cloth. Lake noticed that there was much whispering among some of the sailors as they footed the ratlines, and argued ill from it, believing that they had a clear idea as to the nature of the stranger.

While Salter delayed his verdict the forces of nature were busy. The sun lifted a yellow head above the horizon, and the remnants of the fog drifted into almost nothing. The second craft was now a well-defined shape in the distance, and her swordlike hull and tapering masts alike announced a swift goer of the waters.

White aloft with many sails, she was riding after the foremost ship with water rolling back from her bows in a boiling whirl, yet with ease that gave further evidence as to her speed.

It could now be seen that she carried many men, and that various big guns were in place for desperate work. It did not need the firing of a second shot nor the plunge of the missile to reveal what it all meant. And no Government flag floated aloft.

Salter, having a time of leisure, saw that he was to be questioned again, and he forestalled that matter by advancing upon his charges. He eyed them closely, interested to see whether they were reasonably cool or in a panic, and the nod of his head was approving.

"It would be useless," he said quietly, "for me to try to deceive you as to what's off our hull. If she was a warship she would throw out her colors. Frankly, that's a pirate, and I have reason to believe it is the fellow called Little Nero."

"One of the gang whipped by the warship General Scott," returned Mr. Gladden.

"Little Nero was then present, but whether he was whipped I am not able to say. My information is that he ran away and left Red Roger and Blackington to fight the warship alone."

There was something in the Captain's tones that smacked of bitterness, but it passed unnoticed then.

"How," Lake asked, "do you know it is Little Nero?"

"Have you never heard his ship described? Look at the painting of her, as shown by a strong glass. She is shaded gray—that is, with different shades working into her color that range from pale gray to black gray. That's Little Nero's notion. And, too, if I heard aright in San Francisco, the general look of her is that of the Clear the Way, as the buccaneer's brigantine is named. Now, if——"

A flag broke out at the brigantine's upper works.

"Little Nero!" pronounced Salter.

"We can no longer doubt that," added Mate Wilkinson. "Notice the crossbones in a field of lined red, which represents Rome burning. All accounts agree that Nero's vessel is so flagged."

"Captain Salter, will she overhaul us?" asked Agatha, a catch in her speech.

The skipper sent a glance at his own canvas.

"Two swift craft," he commented tersely. "It will be a handsome chase, but I bet on the Lively Lucy. Mr. Gladden, when we were in San Francisco I advised you to equip your ship fully with cannon, but you allowed us only the bow-chaser. No use to us now. If

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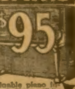

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I had the guns I'd fight that cur gladly, but, as it is—all depends on the Lucy's heels!"

CHAPTER VI.

AN HOUR passed by and the chase still held. The Clear the Way had not fired again, and everything had resolved itself into a test of speed. That this would continue was not certain, for the pirate was within gunshot, and might at any moment send another cannon ball. The previous shots had been fired merely to bring the Lucy to, but it was possible at any time to drop a missile closer. If well aimed, a shot would sweep the Lucy's rigging or breach her hull, and that was what made the situation keenly depressing.

Which was the faster craft? Even Salter had not been able to say, thus far, tho he calmed the fears of his passengers by asserting that a slight gain was made every minute.

When circumstances permitted he walked to where Haggett stood scowling blackly at the pursuer.

"Well?" the skipper questioned.

"Oh! If we but had the guns!" grated the mate. "I'd give half my life that's left to get a whack at Little Nero. The dog ran away when the warship was hammering us. Only for that our old Shooting Sword would be afloat now, and we in her. Left us and Red Roger to fight alone. What happened then? Roger is dead and his ship a hundred fathoms under. Little Nero ran away! The black cur!"

"Softly, softly!" Salter cautioned. "All you say is true, and I fairly thirst to jump at Nero, myself, but don't allow our passengers to get an inkling of our feelings. Let the future and our guns settle with yonder sneak. For now, all we can do is to run before the brigantine. Can we do it?"

"Hard to say, but I call it we are dropping her astern an inch at a time."

"My idea, also, but I hope Nero won't get that notion, too. A lucky shot at this range would possibly bring down our upper works enough to make us broach to, and then it would all be over with."

"Why isn't that shot fired?"

"You know Nero is mighty proud of his brigantine, and thinks her the fastest craft afloat. I've a notion he wants to race us to prove his point, so we may get no pounding until he loses his confidence."

"If old Gladden had allowed you to gun this ship as you wished we could fight the Clear the Way——"

"He didn't permit it, which settles that point. Humph! I see no reason why I shouldn't smoke."

He walked below quietly, entered his cabin and secured a cigar. When about to leave he saw the laws of California on his unmade berth and picked it up. His bookmark was at a statute on cruelty to animals, but he began to read with keen interest. The law was brief, but much to his liking.

"Give me ten days more," he remarked, "and I'll have the whole book at my finger's end. Why, I could hold a court, even now, as skilfully as any notary in the State of—no matter where. Now, this law on arson——"

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He plunged into the reading, and lost himself wholly, nor did he cease until he had continued to the end. Then he laid the volume aside with something like a sigh.

"Clearly," he muttered, "I've mistaken my calling. I wish I was back in the legal profession. I long to sit in judgment on a case. Pity I haven't got Little Nero in the dock. Not having him, I suppose I must go back to the deck!"

He went, and the room and the cabin became alike deserted. Yet, a few minutes later, there was a fresh stir and another man, having emerged from some obscure place, stole soft-footed but hastily toward the Captain's room. He opened the door and entered.

The man was the sailor known as Asa Striker. He was remote from his proper station on deck, but with work there at a standstill and all eyes on the pirate, nobody was watching his neighbor, and his trespass on forbidden regions had passed unnoticed.

Gaining the Captain's quarters, he stopped and shot an investigating glance around. The book was on the berth, and he hurriedly picked it up. With nimble fingers he turned to the forward fly leaf. Something was written there, and he read quickly.

"My name!" he murmured. "I was sure I recognized the book. What does it mean? He has my book, and uses my name. But why, why? He never looks closely at me, and does not seem to suspect who I am, but this is too strange to be without meaning. I am in danger, and there is no way of escape. What am I to do?"

Too agitated to notice that the old address, San Aloydo, had been carefully and skilfully scratched out and Saraconito written in its place, he dropped the book and wrung his hands in weak alarm. A stir overhead aroused him and he hastily left the place and regained the deck unnoticed.

Just before that moment Mate Wilkinson had sauntered near to the cabin party. Lake greeted him buoyantly.

"Want to hold a million-dollar wager?" he asked.

"For whom? Little Nero?" was the dry reply.

"Fact is," interrupted Marx, "Lake and I have been betting rather foolishly on the chances if we came to grapples with the pirate. If we hold our way the fellow may shoot us to pieces. Now, suppose we come to and invite boarders—what then? I call us a fighting lot. Captain Salter's original men are a hardy set, and seem built for fighting. Then old Benny Chain is a muscular man, and we passengers could do our little best rather well."

"You forget Asa Striker," suggested Eveline.

"Do I? Hardly, but he couldn't whip a schoolboy," was the contemptuous reply. "I could manage him with one hand, and—well, if the freebooters come we might offer up Asa as a sacrifice. Let's get to business, tho. Wilkinson, could we be boarded successfully?"

"I'll suggest," the mate returned evasively, "that we think not and let it go at that."

"He sides with me!" Lake exclaimed.

"But look here!" cried Marx. "We are, all told, eighteen men besides the cook——"

"How many has yonder pirate?" demanded Lake, with a wave of his hand.

"We offset his superiority of numbers by our position as defenders. It's no child's play to storm a hostile deck."

Wilkinson saw that Lake was ready to maintain his position, and as the girls were taking the discussion seriously, he made haste to get the subject out of mind. Arguments that they could not resist successfully were to be considered in the future, but not now with propriety.

While they still talked there was a commotion forward and, looking, they saw Striker and another man in a hostile grapple. The man was Axlon, one of Salter's old crew, and he was carrying the day easily.

"Fine amusement at this crisis!" snapped Lake, angrily.

Others were moving, but it was he who arrived first. Anxious to break up the fight he ran a foot between the struggling men, and, by mere luck, tripped both. Striker came to his feet like a ball, flashed a hand to his belt and bared his sheath-knife. Then he took a step toward Lake, but was stopped as Haggett laid heavy hands upon him. The mate drove him to the forecastle with a parting kick, and Asa disappeared.

The matter violated discipline, and would have been ridiculous at that critical juncture if it had not smacked of the tragic. That such a thing should happen when a pirate was chasing them was almost beyond belief, and Salter's face was dark with anger.

"That fellow," he said, with a sweeping gesture toward the forecastle, "shall taste the lash on his bare back when we can give the time."

"Begging your pardon, sir," said Benny Chain, respectfully, "but Asa was not the man to blame."

"Who was?"

"Axlon stole his tobacco, and when he tried to get it back, kicked him, and then Asa up and at him, sir," Benny explained.

"That is right," said Haggett, with a rush of unexpected frankness. "I saw it all, myself."

"I was only joking with the man," said Axlon, his tones surly.

"We will have no more jokes while this chase is on," asserted Salter, grimly. "Looks like you've all gone crazy. Drop the whole affair!"

He wound up with a gesture so fierce that even the passengers went aft with some haste. Not all of them seemed satisfied.

"Is Striker being picked upon because he is not one of the original members of the crew?" asked Agatha, with spirit. "He is a weaker man physically than his mates."

"Nothing the matter with his temper," interjected Lake, grimacing. "He had his knife at me like a flash."

"Scared, probably. Flustered!"

"He has too much of what I may call emotional temper," said Wilkinson, slowly, "or, perhaps I should say, he is confounded nervous. Really, I don't suppose he intended to harm you, Lake, nor anybody else, but he lost his bearings and drove plump on the reef of trouble. I hope the Captain will pass it by and that we'll hear no more about it."

Others hoped so, too, and nobody suspected what an important part the grotesquely untimely incident was to play in the future.

Meanwhile, the chase was holding as before. The older mariners in the Lively Lucy still believed they were dropping the pirate astern slowly, but the gain, if there was one, was not encouraging. The ship was still within gunshot, and unable to get away so speedily that she would fail to get other shots when Little Nero saw fit to act.

It was Eveline who beset Salter again with a direct and forcible question.

"Captain," she said, "tell us whether the pirate will overhaul us. We have a right to know. Speak out!"

"If I believed he would come up with us, would it be kindness to admit it to a woman?"

"Sir, there are no cowards here. What about the enemy?"

The evasive reply had annoyed her, and her spirit rose to reinforce the question. Salter eyed her with admiration visible in his lean face.

"You shall have the truth," he answered. "The pirate will——"

He was interrupted as a deep sound boomed over the sea and a cannon ball plunged a few fathoms beyond their hull.

This strange story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

THREE FINGERED JACK.

"It happened this way," said the washerwoman's husband to the little boy with the catcher's mitt, who was far too little for the other boys to play with. "Old Stickinthemud——"

"Is this an Indian story?" asked the little boy.

"Yes. Old Stickinthemud——"

"Was his name really and truly Old Stickinthemud?"

"Of course. Well, Old Stickinthemud——"

"Was his father's name Mr. Stickinthemud?"

"No, of course not. Indians don't hand down their names from father to son the way we do. They name them from something they see or that happens about the wickiup——"

"What's a wickiup?"

"A wigwam."

"What's a wigwam?"

"A wigwam is a wickiup—ain't you got no sense?"

"My mamma doesn't permit me to play with people who talk to me like that!" said the little boy, sternly.

"Then run and play!"

"But what did old Stickinthemud do?"

"Old Stickinthemud said to me, 'Three Fingered Jack——'"

"Three Fingered Jack?"

"Yes. When the Indians meet a brave man they don't call him by his own name; they give him a new name that is descriptive of what he kin do."

"And Old Stickinthemud called you Three Fingered Jack?"

"Yes. My name in Indian is Three Fingered Jack, the Tar Heeled Terror of the Plains."

"Have you only got three fingers?"

"Yes. This finger an' thumb were cut off with a tommy hatchet in the great uprisin' between the Blackfeet an' the Bigfeet tribes."

"But did you have tar on your heels?"

"On one of 'em. This one.

"You see, they had captured me one night when I was fast asleep, first removin' my trusty gun an' knives an' pistols beyond my reach. They were goin' to dip me in a kettle of tar and——"

"Make a tar baby of you?"

"No, they was goin' to make a torch of me. Well, they stripped off my clothes——"

"Weren't you ashamed?"

"No. They stripped off my clothes and——"

"Didn't you get goose pimples?"

"I don't know. They stripped off my clothes and then——"

"Weren't you scared?"

"Naw! I don't git scared of nothin'! They stripped off my clothes and were goin' to dip me down in the tar, when just as one heel went in I give the kittle a kick and the hot tar splashed all over the Indians that were dancin' around the fire, and they caught fire and half the tribe was burned up right there."

"Don't Indians have no fire department?"

"Naw! Then I ran."

"Without your clothes?"

"Yes, without my clothes. I ran for the mountains, twenty miles away, where I knew there was a big cave. The whole tribe came after me, runnin' like deers. I reached the mountain pass an' I ran around the corner that led to the cave, and when I got around the corner where they couldn't see I didn't run into the cave, but jumped straight up over the mouth of it behind a big stone that was there and crouched down.

"In a minute here they came! First came the warriors, then the boys, an' then the girls an' then the old men and then the old women an' then the little boys an' then the little girls, all comin' Indian file an' runnin' lickety split as fast as they could run, the whole tribe! The first warrior seen the mouth of the cave an' give a loud whoop an' rushed in an' the others whooped and follered——"

"Did the little baby Indians whoop?"

"Yes. They——"

"Maybe they had whooping cough."

"No. They was taught to whoop. When the last one of 'em went in I gave the big stone a push an' down it fell in front of the cave, shuttin' in the whole tribe. Then I walked off whistlin' an' left 'em to starve to death.

"The other side of the range I met my friend, Old Stickinthemud, and when I had told him what I had done an' showed him the tar on my heel to prove it he named me Three Fingered Jack, the Tar Heeled Terror of the Plains. Then Old Stickinthemud, as I started to tell you——"

"You John!" came the voice of the washerwoman from the basement. "You good-for-nothin' lazy critter, you better git busy an' bring me a scuttle of coal! If I'm goin' to work myself to death scrubbin' clothes to fill your good-for-nothin' mouth——"

"Does she fill your mouth with clothes?" asked the little boy.

"Naw! That's just her way o' talkin'. Well, I gotta go now."

"Well, thank you. That was a dandy story. May I call you Three Fingered Jack, the Tar Heeled Terror of the Plaines?"

"You can when there's just us two together."

"Don't you want any one to know?"

"Naw! You see, I might be arrested for starvin' that tribe of Indians."

"You, John!"

"Comin'."

* * *

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CHAPTER VII.

THE fight that followed was a short and fiery one. Colonel Dick sent three of his assailants reeling to the ground. But his horse was shot from under him, and he escaped from the desert afoot, hotly pursued by the three enemies he had left unwounded. As he ran he could hear the shrill voice of the woman he had once loved giving rapid orders for his pursuit. He took a course toward the North star along a little dry arroyo, running with all the strength and wind he possessed. For a while he still heard his pursuers hallooing in his rear, and then they took a false trail and he began to outdistance them.

He found himself at dawn in an arid valley between low distant sierras, a valley full of dry grama grass, and bristling cacti and chaparral. He was without water and without food. He knew what it meant to linger too long in a region such as this without these necessities, so he pushed doggedly northward. The brilliant desert sunshine was a cruel mockery. Horned toads and rattlers scuttled thru the dry grass. Dust devils got up and circled about him, his only companions. The light alkaline dust of the desert got into his throat and nostrils and made his thirst almost intolerable. But he kept muttering to himself: "Well, I beat her, anyway! I beat her, anyway!"

He husbanded his ammunition and kept his pistol by him as a very precious thing. He knew that he would be pursued by half the Heraristas of Guana Juato as soon as it became known that he had destroyed the usefulness of Veta Madre. He meant to sell his life very dearly. He meant to become a bitter memory to these treacherous Mexicans.

Toward noon the desert began to be full of puzzling mirages. Colonel Dick was well acquainted with this phenomenon, but tortured as he was with thirst, he could not help but imagine that they might, after all, be the beautiful blue lakes of water they so treacherously represented. Once he turned from his course and pursued one, for he had no idea how many miles, only to find always before him the dry, pitiless desert.

"Well, there are worse enemies than the Heraristas," he muttered. "I would rather die suddenly and fighting than in this manner." He began to be tortured with the idea that those wise Mexicans had refused to pursue him, preferring to leave him to this more horrible fate.

But in this last surmise he was mistaken. At dusk, as he sank down beside a mesquite hill, all but spent, he became suddenly conscious that there on the far horizon was a group of horsemen riding rapidly toward him. He believed he could hide in an arroyo and evade them, and so he sought a shallow, dry ditch not far away and lay down in the sandy bed of it.

The horsemen came on at breakneck speed. They had located him, he felt sure now. They came straight as an arrow. The dusk was gathering, and he believed it might conceal his movements. He leaped up and ran with staggering steps at right angles to the direction they were riding. When he could run no longer he once more dropped down into a dry ditch and lay panting for breath.

The horsemen rode forward. Then they circled and came back, as he could tell by their hoofbeats and hallooing. It was becoming so dark that they could not stay in touch with one another without signaling. Finally he could tell by the sound that they were beating up the territory systematically. He decided that to lie where he was and conserve his strength was really his wisest course. They had all the advantage of him so long as they were mounted and he afoot and worn out.

So all that long, torturing night he lay there in the ditch and listened to them beating up the neighborhood. Sometimes he dozed a little from sheer weariness, and then he had visions of his sister married to the hated Kitzi Kishinuma. He always awoke gritting his teeth with rage and hate. And then it was, in that clear perspicuity that comes sometimes in the trail of vivid dreams, that he suddenly saw the meaning of what Kitzi had said—that he would make the two proud Folsoms come to him on their knees and beg him to marry Patricia. He was in league with the villain Cutahama to humble the United States and make her bow her head to Mexico.

He leaped up suddenly. "I must live!" he muttered. "I must live to defeat this villain in his dastardly undertakings."

He realized that he would have no chance at all against his pursuers if it came daylight and he was still in the neighborhood. He summoned all his strength to try to get away from the dragnet that they were seeking to close about him. In that desert atmosphere he knew that morning and garish day would come with a rush. There would be no misty dawn, no lingering sunrise.

Crouching low, he made his way thru the dry grass. The coast seemed clear. He was soon walking with something like his old, manly stride in spite of his weakness from hunger and thirst. He paused and listened intently from time to time. Finally he was aware of the sound of a horse cropping grass on the mesa not far away. A horse—that meant a chance at flight. He crept stealthily forward. No savage Indian could have moved more stealthily.

Presently he could plainly see the outline of the horse against the starry horizon. The animal lifted his head for a moment as if scenting his approach, and then continued to crop the dead grass.

Colonel Dick crept forward now on all fours. One hand came in contact with the riata with which the horse was evidently tethered. He felt along the rope in the opposite direction, expecting to come upon the object to which it was tied. In his teeth he carried a sharp knife with which to sever the rope at the first alarm. His hands suddenly touched the object that held the riata, a man's wrist. Colonel Dick felt the warm, moist flesh under his touch even before he saw the bulk of the man lying in the grass. The other was in a sitting posture in a jiffy.

Colonel Dick thought and executed his thoughts most rapidly. The man, who was a Japanese, was reaching for his knife. The American beat him to it. The two hands fell upon the knife at his belt in the same instant. The Jap's hand grasped the knife, but Dick's hand grasped the Jap's. With a quick, powerful motion he forced the knife around, pointing it toward the other's stomach, and with another sudden motion he threw himself upon the Jap, and with hs knee against the two fists that held the knife drove the blade up to the hilt into the body of his enemy. The flesh ripped with a disgusting sound. The Jap started to cry out, but Colonel Dick's free hand had found his throat, and his cry ended in a death gurgle.

The American realized that he had no time to lose. The horse, becoming frightened at the scuffle, had lifted his head and snorted. Other horsemen might be awake near by. He hastily snatched the canteen from the dying Jap, as well as the haversack, which he judged to contain food. Then, securing his rifle and belt of cartridges, he was up and away.

Not, however, before the horse had snorted for a second time, and an inquiring voice had called a Japanese name—no doubt that of the man he had just slain—did the Colonel mount hastily and dash away. He was pursued by shots and shouts. He replied to neither. His ammunition was precious, and he knew that he would need it all as soon as day broke, unless in the meantime he should succeed in outdistancing his pursuers. Instead, he bent low over the saddle horn and drank greedily from the full canteen, then rumaged in the haversack, and having brought forth a few flabby tortillas devoured them avidly.

Dawn came, and he was still pursued. A big Mexican on a great roan horse threatened to come up with him. Colonel Dick gave him his attention. Coming to a dead stop, twice, he took steady aim at him, but his hand was shaky from exposure and hunger, and both times the bullet went wild. He waited for the light to become better and for the man on the roan to gain upon him still farther. Then he suddenly checked his mount and raised his weapon to fire. In a flash there was something like an explosion of his gun, and the barrel fell from the stock, a useless bit of junk. The big man on the roan was evidently some marksman himself. His bullet had hit the Colonel's gun and unlimbered it.

There was nothing left for young Folsom now but a dead straightaway running race with the odds all against him. He put spurs to his mount and fled northward across the mesas. At least a dozen horsemen thundered on his trail, always led by the big man on the big roan. And from time to time that big man raised his Krag Jorgensen and fired at the fleeing Colonel.

The sun had at length lifted itself high above the mesas. The horse was showing signs of giving out. Of those pursuers at least half had dropped far into the rear of the race. Stopping in the first deep arroyo, Colonel Dick hastily jumped down and washed the alkali dust from his horse's nostrils. Then, taking a short swig of the water in his canteen, he gave the remainder to his faithful mount.

"Pull me out of here, old fellow!" he whispered. "Pull me out of here, and I'll set up a silver statue of you, and you shall live in clover the rest of your life!" And the horse nuzzled his head against the breast of the brave young American as if he understood what was being said

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Sloan's Liniment
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to him and appreciated the feeling behind the words.

As the young man once more rode out into the open, he saw that the big rider of the roan was surprisingly near and was raising his weapon for another shot. Colonel Dick dodged low in the saddle, and as he did so there was a sharp report and his poor faithful mount plunged forward into a bed of cactus, mortally wounded. He leaped clear of the horse, and bounded back into the arroyo in a jiffy, and there he waited with his pistol at the ready.

The oncoming riders saw his preparation and began to make a wide detour of his hiding place. It was plain to him that they did not intend to come within range of his pistol so long as they could avoid it. Using his big knife he hastily dug into the bottom of the sandy ditch and prepared to defend his life if they came within range of his big Colt automatic.

Instead of one, two or three were now taking deliberate pot shots at him from long range. He answered only when one ventured very close or presented a tempting target. He was husbanding his ammunition. He wished now he had kept the water, since the horse got no good of it, anyway. Thus the Heraristas circled about him and kept firing till the pitiless sun was high in midheaven. Colonel Dick finally lost all sense of time, place and reality. He seemed to be in a nightmare, a nightmare in which he was doomed to dwell a hundred years in a sandy, choking pit with angry bullets kicking up the alkali dust all about him, and with mocking demons circling, always circling, on the horizon, just out of reach of his weapon. He cursed himself now for not bringing a long range rifle with him when he played Lochinvar to Ynez Herara; but such a weapon would have aroused her suspicions, or so he had reasoned at the time.

Then, all at once, as it seemed, two bullets hit him in the left leg below the knee and another ripped its way thru his left shoulder. He fell back in the dust and gritted his teeth with the burning pain.

"If I feign death now," he thought. "They will come upon me, and then I'll get as many of them as they get of me, anyway."

So he lay back in the dirt with wide eyes staring up at the heavens; and sure enough his tormentors began to close in upon him. They came, still on horseback, fanwise, focusing their march on the point where he lay. He waited till the nearest one was hardly a hundred feet away; then he raised up as best he could for his swimming head and fired deliberately. One, two, three, his weapon barked; and at every explosion some man bit the dust. In his semi-delirium he felt triumphant. He had wrecked the pumps at the mine, and he had accounted for a good many of these villains sent out to hunt him—seven, at least, he counted. He wanted to cut seven notches in the handle of his pistol; but even while he thought crazily upon that, his enemies began to fire at him again. A ball struck him heavily in the right breast, and the world swam around him.

"That's the end of me," he thought; and he thought he saw the tormenting face of Ynez Herara stooping above him.

He was rapidly sinking into oblivion and blackness; then he was suddenly brought back by a sharp pain in his neck. Some one of those scoundrels was evidently trying to hack his head off.

Finally he heard some one say, "That's enough; he's dead."

A hundred years of dread and suffering passed by, then he heard: "Shall we bury him here or take him back with us to show Senorita Herara?"

Colonel Dick, if he ever heard the answer, did not have consciousness left to record it. He sank down, down into a black abyss.

"So this is death!" he thought vaguely. "I wonder were Patricia is, poor little girl!" And with that he thought and felt no more.

CHAPTER VIII.

DEAD OR ALIVE?

IT SUITED the deep, sly, scheming purpose of Ynez Herara to make a mystery of Colonel Dick Folsom's disappearance and to pretend that he was still living. Two days after he was shot to pieces in the ditch, the soldiers, whom she had sent out to bring him back alive or with proof of his death, returned to Guana Juato with satisfactory proof that he was dead. They brought her all his belongings and a certificate signed by a Trappist monk to the effect that he was dead, and that the monk had received him for burial.

"For the sake of A. L. por A. L., you will keep his death an absolute and profound secret. You will also keep from the populace here the secret that the pumps for the Veta Madre were damaged beyond all hope of repair. We must pretend that we are operating the mine, you understand."

Thus she commanded her Mexican myrmidons. The Japanese had been dismissed merely with the instructions that they must make believe Colonel Dick was still alive.

That night she dispatched eight emissaries on secret missions to borrow silver and gold coin or bullion in six markets that she thought likely to listen to her siren plea. But mostly she borrowed in large sums from one Xinthia of Estado Morelos, on the promise that if the cause she represented were successful she would become his wife. What matter that the old Indian already had a wife? Divorce and polygamy both are easy among Mexican bandits. From a well-known European government she also managed to borrow, thru its South American agents. And all that she got by hook and crook and chicanery, she had recoined at a mint that she kept going inside the big prison-like pen that surrounded the opening of the Veta Madre mine. She kept the engines going, and caused the whistles to blow regularly at the change of shifts, and she kept one little wheezing pump running about a six-inch stream of water, reporting that since the mine was once pumped out that was all the water that was running in.

Then it was that the stately grandees and caballeros of Guana Juato, chatting over their black coffee and cigarettes, decided that it was all a mistake about the pumps being blown up the night of the big celebration. Indeed, what liars these Gringoes were! No doubt the Gringo just told that to make a sensation. But where was the Yankee engineer, anyway? Did he stay so close, then, at the mine that no one could see him night or day? He was dead? No, that was all a lie. He had been seen again and again, sitting in the grand salon at the Herara house talking to Ynez. He had even been seen in the streets. That was all a lie about his having been killed.

Thus the talk ran for two months, or until the first of November, 1915. It was reported in the United States that Colonel Dick Folsom had gone over to the Mexican cause, had married a rich Mexican girl, and was playing a large part in the anti-Gringo movement then going forward in North Mexico. Old Colonel Folsom disowned his son publicly. An order for his arrest was issued at El Paso. He was classed with those who can't come back. Patricia knew that he had gone into Mexico to open up a mine for Ynez Herara and that he was engaged to her. She rather gloried in her brother's independence of mind, in throwing off his allegiance to the United States, if self-interest sufficiently demanded it. In this attitude Kitzi, who had at length recovered from his wounds, constantly encouraged her. Colonel Folsom had forbidden the Japanese to see his daughter, but still they had met a number of times in secret.

"Your brother is a true cosmopolitan, Mitz Patreezia," the Oriental would say. "What to him is a Gringo-made boundary? He, even as you and I, has seen the wider vision."

And Ynez even deceived her brother Rafael, and the astute Pancho Villa. She wrote them constantly about the steady output of the Veta Madre, and of the faithfulness of Colonel Dick Folsom, who hardly left the mine day or night. And she sent what seemed to be substantial proof of the mine's success, in the form of hard, minted coins to pay their troops. The coin bore the eagle, cascabel, and cactus of the Republic of Mexico, but it also bore the name Francisco Villa, and of the Estado Guana Juato, and on one side a picture of the beautiful Ynez herself.

Pancho Villa nearly had a fit when he saw the first of these beauties. "That girl is a princess," he shouted. "I've a notion to take her away from that Gringo and marry her myself."

This in spite of the fact that he had been married three times within the last few years, and that all three of his wives were still living!

Rafael Herara was also proud of the coins bearing his sister's beautiful face. He scented power for the first time. He would certainly make himself president of this republic. What could a man not do with such a sister as that to assist him?

So the scheming with Japan and the bidding for the favor of this and that European government went on constantly. Ynez said that she would have the Veta Madre on a paying basis by January, 1916. She had done even better than that; for on Thanksgiving day she sent North to her brother and the Villistas in the field her first package of recoined borrowed gold and silver.

Meanwhile, Cutahama had returned to his mother country, and the scheme for gaining control of the Pacific thru the humiliation of America went steadily forward. The Japanese fleet was reviewed by the Emperor for Cutahama's special benefit. New battle cruisers, dreadnaughts, and torpedo boats were constantly being built. The big steel plant, the greatest in the world outside of Germany and the United States, worked night and day. The fires never went out in her boilers.

There was jingo talk in all Japan. Japan would become to the Pacific what England was to the Atlantic; it was her destiny. Only the Yankee stood in the way, but the Yankee could be brushed out of the way with a sweep of the hand. Before twelve months were over San Francisco would be in the hands of the Nipponese. Thus ran the talk.

It was only in Guana Juato and the immediate vicinity that Ynez had trouble in keeping up her bluff and pretenses. Rumor persistently denied that Colonel Dick Folsom was anywhere about the mine, and persistently reported that he had been killed—chopped to pieces by Ynez's own men.

A little while before Christmas the young woman herself went to the lone Trappist monastery in the mountain gorge, whence the villains said they had taken Colonel Dick to get a certificate of his death. She wished to get that death certificate exchanged for a marriage certificate. The perfidious Ynez did not doubt in the least that she could get those old monks to do her bidding by the gold she could offer them immediately, and by the great endowments of wealth she could promise them for the future. She little calculated on the austerity of the Trappist order, or the honesty of the men in charge of that particular monastery.

"The fate of poor Colonel Folsom was indeed sad," she began, as soon as she had an audience with the father superior. But, of course, he could expect no other fate, as he had turned traitor to the trust that we here in Mexico had placed in him."

"No other fate could be expected," commented the priest.

"His death was very unfortunate for me," said Ynez, after some verbal sparring. "He and I were married in San Felipe church just before his flight and death."

"Indeed."

"Yes, and the bad part of it is, that Father Felix, who married us, had a stroke the next day, as you no doubt have learned, and he failed to make out a marriage certificate, and also cannot remember pronouncing the ceremony."

"I have heard of Father Felix's great misfortune," replied the priest. "I am very sorry for him, and am more than sorry to hear that his memory is impaired. No doubt there was a civil marriage, and so, if you wish to inherit any of young Folsom's property, that, you know, will serve."

"No, there was no civil marriage. That was to have been performed the next day, but after a lover's quarrel with me, Colonel Folsom seemed to have lost his mind, and hence behaved as he did."

"That is unfortunate, indeed."

"Yes, it is unfortunate. Now every prospect I have in the world depends upon my proving myself the wife of Colonel Dick Folsom. Bigger things depend on it than you can guess, living cooped up here as you do. This is my proposition. It will be no deception in the real spirit, if you people here give me a certificate showing that I was married to him. I was, but Father Felix simply cannot remember it. I have here with me, waiting outside, two witnesses to the fact that we were married. Cannot you give me a certificate on their evidence?"

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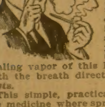

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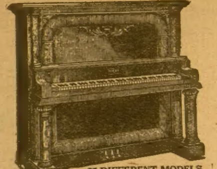
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Ynez was ready to fall on the good man's neck out of sheer gratitude. He continued: "Send me your two witnesses and let me question them. Return to this room alone at dusk, and I think I can get your marriage certificate for you."

Ynez hurried out and hastily sent up her witnesses, two of her old servants, whom she had bribed to tell that they were present at the wedding ceremony. Having coached them carefully before bringing them with ther, she now merely said: "Remember to tell a straight story and don't get yourselves mixed up. I will wait here and learn how you came out."

The two returned after a very few minutes and reported that all was well; that evidently the good father had believed every word they had said. Ynez felt happy and triumphant. She no longer had any admiration for Cleopatra. The Cleopatra game was too easy; it was merely child's play.

At dusk she returned to the big room in which the father superior had given her audience. The attendant who bowed her in disappeared at the door and left her there alone. She looked thru the unlighted gloom for any sign of the priest. Apparently no one was in the room. She gave a little shiver of apprehension. Could these priests be playing some trick on her? She sat down and waited, tapping her foot impatiently on the costly rug under her chair.

Then, suddenly, out of the gloom came a voice: "Ynez, Ynez, is that you? This is Colonel Dick. Ynez, don't you know me?"

The voice was hollow and unnatural, like a voice from the tomb. And suddenly before her in the gloom appeared the long, cadaverous form of Colonel Dick Folsom, or his spirit—she could not tell which.

She leaped to her feet and gave a scream of terror. But the apparition hurried forward and caught her in its arms.

"Ah!" it breathed. "I have you at last! I have longed for you and longed for you, Ynez; and now that I have you I will never let you go. Here in the world of the dead where I live we can be always together."

The young woman was frightened till the blood fairly froze in her heart. She honestly believed that Dick Folsom had come from the grave to claim her.

"Let me go! Let me go!" she screamed, as his cold, moist hands closed upon her wrists. Then, as he clasped her closer, she fainted dead away in his arms. She had made believe that he was not dead. She had conjured him out of the grave for political purposes. Now he had arisen out of the grave to claim her promise of love and marriage. It was too much for her. Her heart almost stopped from fright, and she felt that she was surely dying.

CHAPTER IX.

A MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE.

WHEN the villains who had shot Colonel Dick Folsom to pieces carried him still and bleeding to the Trappist monastery, they certainly believed him dead. They would have buried him in the desert, or have left him for the vultures, only that they wanted a death certificate to show the implacable Ynez. Therefore they had carried him across four leagues of desert, and the fathers at the monastery at once pronounced him dead. They had taken his body and washed it pityingly, laying it out for burial.

Then it was that the night's coolness and the bath and the tender care once more revived a spark of life. Colonel Dick, like Kipling's Tomlinson, having been either to the gate of heaven or hell, came back star by star. He, like Tomlinson heard, "like the roar of a rainfed ford, the roar of the Milky Way." He seemed to live a thousand years in interminable space colder than absolute zero, at the absolute zero of darkness. Then a thousand shooting pains assailed him, he thought he was falling millions and millions of miles, and that the stars were knocking against him as he fell. Finally he landed with a jolt on the cooling board where he lay.

In his extreme pain he cried out feebly, and the good old priest who had been detailed to watch by his side came at once to him, tho in some trepidation.

"Water!" moaned Colonel Dick, and the priest at once brought him a dipper of water. He could not sip it after he had it; but instead began again to fall like Tomlinson from sun to sun.

When he next came to himself to any extent he found that he was bandaged from head to foot. He had time to note this fact for a moment, and then he sank into delirium. He believed himself dead and inhabiting the world of the dead. And while his wounds were very slowly healing this hallucination remained constantly with him. Every day he rose out of his grave and went in search of Ynez; and when he had found her he begged her to come to him to the world of the dead, and live there with him according to her promise. In his hallucination these Trappist monks, in their strange robes, were merely inhabitants of that other world of departed souls. Hence, while he was more or less conscious of eating their food and receiving their pitying attentions, they still harmonized with his dream and became part of it.

This continued for many weeks, and thus he was still suffering from visions and dreams when Ynez came to work her nefarious scheme of pretending to be his wife. She seemed to him only as she had always looked in the visions, except that this time when he caught her wrists they did not elude him like thin air, and when he clasped her, as he had clasped her hundreds of times before in his delirium, she did not become incorporeal in his grasp. Always before he had been miserable in his delirium; now he was entirely happy.

When the girl screamed, and the old priest feared that the insane man might kill her in his love, he came in and laid a hand lightly on his shoulder.

"Brother Ricardo," he said very gently, as he laid his hand on Colonel Dick's shoulder. "Brother Ricardo, you must leave her alone now. Tomorrow she will come to you again. She is weary now. See, she has fallen asleep."

Colonel Dick obeyed the priest without a murmur. A strange thing about him from the time he had first begun to recover was that, altho he soon became strong enough to have manhandled almost any monk in the establishment, he always obeyed them as implicitly as a little child.

"Now, Senorita Herara," said the father superior next day. "You see the condition to which you have brought this poor young man. He has his bodily strength back, thanks to our very careful nursing and our prayers. But his mind is still greatly impaired. The thing he longs for in all his mind's wanderings is for you. You alone, I think, can restore him to sanity. You have promised to marry him, I feel sure of that. If you will marry him now, you shall have that marriage certificate that seems so essential to your political success. But I wish you to remember that this poor young man is still under our protection, and if anything happens we shall take steps with the Carranza government to make you pay the penalty. What do you say? Will you marry him, and agree to care for him in sickness as well as in health?"

The girl was desperate. If she had this man, who was now no more than a dummy, she could make him do her every bidding. She could show him about her mine; he could be seen in and about her house, and above all she would have an irrefutable marriage certificate. It would make her solid with the suspicious inhabitants of Ciudad Guana Juato.

"I will take him for better or for worse," she said, with cleverly imitated humility.

So the man, who had no will of his own, but who did implicitly what he was told, was prepared for a wedding ceremony, and stood up and was married to Ynez Herara y Manrique. A day or two later a grand carriage was seen in the streets of Guana Juato, and poor Colonel Dick, having been schooled carefully in his part, stood up and bowed and smiled to the cheering populace.

Ynez kept him a prisoner within her own palatial mansion, but allowed him to be seen often on the verandas. Every one said that there was a honeymoon going on in that house, but a few remarked that it was rather a strange honeymoon. And whereas he had formerly obeyed the Trappist brothers absolutely, he now obeyed Ynez unquestioningly.

She got him to sign certain papers ordering more pumping machinery from New York. She had him go to the mine and perform certain rather simple mechanical duties. She even got him to write, at her dictation, perfectly intelligent letters to her brother and to Pancho Villa—letters that disarmed their suspicions that all was not right. One of these missives even reached Patricia Folsom, and became a maker of destiny in her life.

The letter, in Colonel Dick's well-known handwriting, read as follows:

"Mr. Rafael Herara:

"My Dear Brother—Since the consummation of my happy marriage with your sister, I have thrown myself body and soul into this work. Our ultimate success is assured. You will one day be president of Mexico. I suppose I shall have to content myself by being your minister of finance, as I am sure you will give me that place.

"Our good friends, the Japanese, are ready to help us in a struggle against the Gringoes as soon as we are ready. Let me advise you that an attack upon some of the citizens of the United States is the best way to precipitate a quarrel with that country.

"I would like to state here that I have changed my mind about my sister's marriage with Mr. Kitzi Kishinuma. I know now that it is the wisest and best thing that she could possibly do. I write you this in the hope that you may forward this intelligence to her, as I understand they have thrown me off, and would not open mail sent to them directly from me. I am,

"Yours for the cause, A. L. por A. L.,
"RICHARD FOLSOM."

This letter having fallen into the hands of Patricia Folsom—if one could so term the devious paths of chicanery by which it was made to reach her—she began to dream dreams of her brother riding into power and honor in the sister republic. One thing she did not like about the letter was the treachery it breathed against the United States. Still, she was entirely hypnotized by that vision of her brother's promised greatness. She had a picture in her mind of him about to become a sort of American Napoleon. Ambition had always been Patricia's besetting sin; now it was beginning to take hold of her for good and all, and to still the voice of conscience within her.

There was just one rift in her cocksureness with regard to her course. That was Tom Ashley and his philosophy. Tom, true lover that he had always been, seemed and was really interested only in the girl's welfare.

"I tell you, Patsy," he would say, "these things they are telling on Dick Folsom

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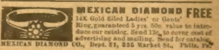
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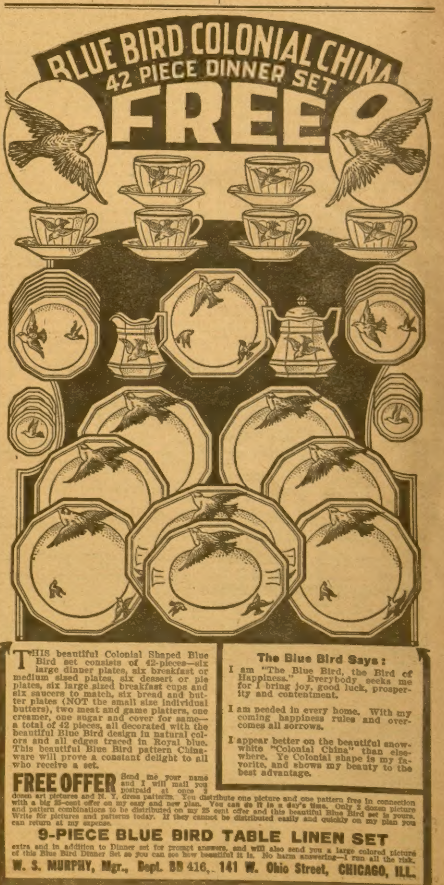

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are not true. Dick Folsom is no traitor. Say what you will, there's something crooked back of all those reports; I for one do not believe a word of them. Dick may have been infatuated with Ynez Herara's beauty, but he hasn't turned traitor against the United States."

But when Patricia showed him the letter in Dick's own handwriting he could find nothing more to say. He had to give up beaten. It was then he made certain utterances against traitors in general and Folsom traitors in particular, and he and Patricia had such a bitter quarrel that she refused to speak to him again.

The next day came the news of the massacre by Villistas of sixteen American miners in the state of Chihuahua, and Tom Ashley became so disgusted that he renounced his love for Patricia Folsom. He remembered that line in her brother's letter: "Let me advise you that an attack on some of the citizens of the United States is the best way to precipitate a quarrel with that country."

Following this affair the big Folsom house at Greenfields might as well have been a pesthouse so far as any decent Californian was concerned. It was like a house of death. The father sat morosely nursing his hatred against his son. The mother wept and said that she felt sure Dicky had had nothing to do with any of that treachery, and that all those stories about him were plain lies. Then, the house becoming intolerable for Patricia, with her half-guilty love for Kitzi on her mind, she accepted the invitation of the wife of a millionaire pineapple planter of Hawaii to go for an indefinite cruise on the Pacific; and her parents, thinking this might enable her to forget Kitzi, consented.

It was the day after her departure for Honolulu that Tom Ashley, finding the strain of his disbelief in the Folsom honor unbearable, determined to risk his life among the Villistas of north Mexico in order to satisfy himself whether or not Dick Folsom was a traitor.

He made his way south of the National Mexican Railway, and stayed all night at the very station where, two weeks before, sixteen of his countrymen had been murdered in cold blood. That day he had to contemplate a grisly sight. Seven black peons who had deserted the cause of Pancho Villa, no doubt under bribes from some contending faction, were lined up against the side of a cattle car and mowed down with a machine gun. He turned sick at heart as he thought of the anarchy and bloodshed that was daily growing worse in north Mexico. And handwriting or no handwriting, he didn't believe that Colonel Dick Folsom wilfully wrote the words of that treacherous letter.

He was six times arrested by Villistas, and found that his only way to secure a release was to produce evidence that he was the friend of Dick Folsom. That was bad. It was evident then that Dick still had his stand-in with these cutthroats. And finally Tom Ashley reached the ancient town of Guana Juato.

Here he gave the former password: "I am a personal friend of Colonel Folsom," and at first found this, as everywhere, an open sesame. Hastily he made his way to the palace where lived the wicked Ynez, and here once more gave the password.

However, it was not necessary, for Ynez already had learned of his approach. At the moment he entered her front hall he was made a prisoner by four burly ruffians, who pounced upon him from behind, even while he was handing his card to the butler. And altho he put up a manly fight, they soon had him bound and gagged, and dragged him thus to a dark and noisome dungeon in the rear and lower part of the house. This last imprisonment was entirely different from all the former ones in that the doors did not open for his release upon his repeating the formula, "I am one of Colonel Folsom's friends." It was different, also, in that no one showed a disposition to give him any sort of a trial.

His gag was removed finally, but his hands were left bound behind him. For four days, once a day, a burly jailer with a key big enough to brain him came and brought him water in a bucket—from which he was allowed to drink in the same manner as a horse—and threw down upon a fairly clean plank bits of meat and tortillas, so that he might eat them as a dog picks up scraps.

Tom Ashley swore that if he ever got out of that place he would have revenge upon the whole Mexican republic. Four days and nights he lay there, and then things began to happen. About midnight he heard two people—evidently a man and a woman, by their tread—walking on the stairway above him. Apparently the man slipped, and his head came against the oaken steps with a sounding thwack. The woman cried out in astonishment and disgust. Then, of a sudden, he heard the man's voice—Dick Folsom's:

"Explain this thing, young woman! How do I come to be in this house and practically a prisoner? Explain before I——"

Tom Ashley could not hear the rest; but he was ready to shout for joy at the knowledge contained in his friend's words—that he was not in league with these murderous Mexicans.

Next he heard a quick, sharp command, in Ynez Herara's voice:

"Pedro, here, quick! Take this man dead or alive. His fall on the stairs has brought his senses back. Take him or kill him."

There was a rush of hurrying feet in the hallway, then a growl of rage from the throat of Colonel Dick, followed by three quick, sharp reports from a pistol. Ashley knew from the succeeding sounds that Colonel Dick had disposed of his would-be captors for the time being, at least.

"Here, tell me what all this means, you vixen!" he heard the Colonel snarl. "Tell me, or by the Eternal I'll——"

For answer the woman screamed at the top of her voice: "Police, police! Murderers, murderers!"

There was a tumult of shouting in the streets and thruout the old house. Tom Ashley fairly prayed for his friend's safety among all those foes. He heard what sounded like a squad of soldiers running on the double-quick down the hall, and judged that his friend was preparing to sell his life dearly.

Then, of a sudden, his ears caught the brisk staccato of distant rifle shots, the roar of light field artillery, and the rataplan of machine guns. And within the house every other noise gave way to the cry: "Los Carranzistas! Los Carranzistas!" Evidently the troops of General Carranza were upon the little city. Tom felt no doubt that this would be one of the first houses they would attack.

Next week's Ledger will contain the concluding chapters of this interesting story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

* * *

Said Nothing.

Young Aldrich was waiting in the parlor for his loved one to appear, when her small brother came in.

"Well, Chester," said Aldrich, "what did your sister say when you told her I was waiting?"

"Why, she didn't say nothing," replied the small brother. "She just took a ring off one finger an' put it on another."

OUR PURPOSE HERE.

You ask me, oh, sincerest friend,
  What is our purpose here,
While passing days may onward trend,
  And year supplanteth year?

What purpose largest place should hold
  In heart and life and plan?
What is a soul's most treasured gold
  In this the sphere of man?

The answer is not hard to see—
  Has it escaped your view,
And have you learned so scant of me,
  And I so small of you?

Oh, kindly friend, the answer seen,
  Like stars that shine above,
Is this and only this, I ween,
  We live that we may love!

* * *

MAKE-BELIEVE.

Little Mrs. Gray fluttered into her guest's room with a pasteboard box in her hand.

"Helen," she said, "I want you to do something for me. See this perfectly beautiful muffler I have bought for Allan's birthday present? Well, his birthday is three weeks off, but I want him to wear the muffler tonight. Please pretend that you have bought it for one of your friends and offer it to Allan to wear. His old muffler is quite shabby, and he's going to an important business men's dinner. It's necessary, I think, that he should look prosperous, and he can't look prosperous while wearing a wornout old muffler, can he?"

"No, Laura, I suppose not," agreed Helen. "But, really, wouldn't I be sailing under false colors if I——"

"Never mind that, dear. It's only a joke, you know. I do want Allan to have the use of the muffler, and I don't wish to spoil the birthday surprise by giving it to him now. He's out in the hall this minute getting ready to start out. Let's go and insist upon his wearing it."

In a moment Helen found herself offering the muffler to her host with a careless generosity that quite surprised herself.

"But I hate to take the new off a present you have bought for some friend, Helen," protested Allan, who would really have preferred his old silk scarf.

"I'm very glad to have you try it out for me," laughed Helen.

"Oh, Allan, it's so becoming to you," said his wife. "That soft gray just suits your complexion. Don't you think he looks nice in it, Helen?"

"Yes, indeed, Laura," agreed Helen, smilingly.

"Allan, do be careful not to lose it. Helen, you have no idea how perfectly reckless Allan is with his belongings. When you have a husband you'll see how much care a man is. Now, Allan, perhaps I'd better fasten this muffler to your overcoat collar with a little safety pin. I'm sure I don't want Helen to be worried about it."

"I shan't have the least anxiety," declared Helen, who marveled at her friend's gratuitous play acting.

"Well, do be careful, anyway. I should so hate to have you lose it, Allan, the way you lose umbrellas."

"Perhaps I had better not borrow it. I can usually be trusted, Laura, not to scatter my wearing apparel about the city, but you——"

"Nonsense. It is a great deal better looking than your own old one, please keep it on. Helen will be hurt now if you don't wear it. Won't you, Helen?"

"Yes, indeed, I shall," asserted Helen, dutifully.

So Allan, trying to look pleased and gracious, thanked her again and went to the dinner, wishing with secret irritation that his wife would not be quite so anxious about his appearance.

The next morning while Helen was packing her trunk to leave Laura came into the room with the muffler.

"Now, wasn't it just like Allan to go to business without even thinking of returning this to you?" she asked. "I took it out of his overcoat pocket before he was up, and he never missed it. You see, men are really awfully careless. Do you wonder that I cautioned him not to lose it?"

"No," murmured Helen, absently. She was a little tired of the muffler.

"And wasn't it just splendid that he never suspected it was really his own muffler that he was wearing? You know, when he was thanking you so effusively last night I could hardly keep my face straight."

"Nor I mine," sighed Helen.

Two days after Helen reached her own home she received a gray silk muffler from Allan. It was a much handsomer and more expensive one than that which he had supposedly borrowed from her.

"My Dear Helen," said the note which accompanied it, "Laura was right, after all. I should have cast away my pride and allowed her to pin that muffler of yours to my overcoat. I have to confess that her anxiety was not unfounded. I must, indeed, be the careless creature she thinks me, for I did lose your muffler. When I went to take it out of my overcoat pocket to return it to you I was astonished to find it gone. I hope that the one I am sending will be a satisfactory substitute for the beautiful muffler you so kindly trusted me with, and that, remembering I am a mere man, you will find it your heart to forgive me.

"By the way, I shall be eternally grateful if you won't say anything to Laura about my losing your muffler. She is such a punctilious little woman that she would be quite upset over my fault, especially after all her warnings. So, with more apologies, I throw myself upon your mercy."

"Good gracious! What shall I do with the thing!" groaned Helen, as she looked at the muffler with deep aversion. "I feel like a double-dyed fraud. For if any one ever obtained goods under false pretenses I certainly have done so in this case."

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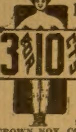
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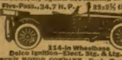
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Barbo Compound..........a small box
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A half pint should be enough to darken the gray hair, and make it soft and glossy. It is not sticky or greasy, and does not rub off. It should make a gray-haired person look 20 years younger.

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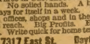
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Sheepherder's Mulligan

By Arthur Chapman

THIS thing I am setting down concerns the Wyoming of the days when Bill Nye was running the Laramie Boomerang, when the Johnson County cattle war was merely fermenting, when Big Nose George's name still made men feel uneasy, and when agriculture was a word that was never spoken in the best circles. The only crops that were raised had either horns or wool, and the Department of Agriculture didn't send bulletins enough into Wyoming to provide shaving paper for Cheyenne's one barber.

In those days the translation of every cattle brand was "trouble." There was trouble in keeping the cattle from drifting, trouble in keeping them off the larkspur, and trouble in keeping other men from thinking that the word "public" in public domain had any real meaning. In particular it had to be pointed out to sheepmen who liked to pedestrianize behind the rambling Rambouillet that the word "public" was actually Crow Injun for "cattle," and that the back trail was the safest trail on which to study out the real root of the term.

I never had any serious arguments with sheepmen personally. Perhaps this was for the reason that most of any arguments to be advanced were left to my cowhands. The range riders in those days were depended upon for pretty nearly all things in the line of police service, neighborhood gossip, phalanx voting and immigration inspection. I aimed to do some riding myself, but when a man is running cattle on a more or less broken up range that's half as big as one of the pocket-edition New England States, what he can see and hear alone is not much, and so I depended chiefly on my men for information.

Having heard rumors that the sheepmen had threatened to ignore various dead lines which we cattlemen had drawn across the face of the State, and being desirous of having our art work kept intact, I had given instructions to keep a sharp lookout for anything that looked like sheep wagons. Consequently, when Missoo came in one day with the information that he had seen a suspicious cloud of dust over toward Dry Creek, I sent him and little Davy, the horse wrangler, over to investigate. When they came back they reported everything all right, but they did it in a way that would have aroused my suspicions if I hadn't been too busy about other matters to notice how Davy was twisting his hat when he talked, and how Missoo kept brushing the dust off his boots when he informed me what he had seen, or rather what he hadn't seen.

"It couldn't have been nothin' but a lot of dust devils—jest a mess of twirly, whirly dust devils that made that there cloud I seen," said Missoo.

And Davy kept echoing: "Yep—dust devils. Them's what done it. The wind twists awful funny down between them twin buttes. There ain't no sheep within a hundred miles of here."

A few days later Antelope came in off the range swearing he had seen a sheep wagon top south of the twin buttes. Missoo and Davy hooted at him so that he almost admitted he hadn't seen it, but at the same time he wasn't satisfied, and the next day he rode out with another one of the boys to investigate a little closer.

When Antelope and his chum came in with a report of no sheep on the range, a blind man would have suspected 'em of lying, but I was worse than blind at the time, having on my mind the ordering of roundup supplies, and I took 'em at their worthless word. Within two weeks about every rider I had on the ranch had ridden out in the neighborhood of the twin buttes, where my prize steers were, and every one of 'em perjured his soul by telling me that there was not a hoof across the dead line, when all the time twenty-five hundred of the Double Bar woollies were taking toll of my richest grass.

One day Shorty, the cook, being so named because he was three inches over six feet, came to me with his resignation, which surprised me some, because Shorty had been with me as boy and man since the year we first figured in the brand book. Shorty's story was long, but I didn't tell him to cut it, because I felt that it had to do with something seriously wrong on the ranch. It seems that the boys were no longer content with Shorty's cooking, and yet he felt that every day he was surpassing himself. There were sneers and grumblings over Shorty's choicest dishes. Missoo and Davy had started the sneering and grumbling, and then had come Antelope and his chum, and then the rest of the boys, one after another, down to Bear Hawkins, our foreman. As Shorty cataloged his critics, I saw that they came in the exact order of those who had visited the phantom sheep camp in the neighborhood of the twin buttes.

I had hard work getting Shorty to promise to stay. Then the next day I rode out in the vicinity of the twin buttes, and soon I saw a sheep wagon top gleaming like a sail in the midst of the sea of sagebrush and brown grass. I knew it was no phantom sheep wagon, for as I rode toward it I could hear the barking of a dog, and soon I caught the tinkle of sheep bells, and down the breeze came the odor of something cooking. I rode in that odor to the camp, and I found that the teasing smell proceeded from a big iron kettle, which was boiling on the fire, and which was being stirred by the only sheepherder I ever saw who wore a goatee. It was a black goatee, and the sheepherder's face was dark, tho he was not a Mexican, and he had a square white cap on his head, and a white apron about his body, and he watched the kettle intently, tho not half so intently as Missoo and Davy and Antelope and his chum, and Pecos Johnson and Bear Hawkins and half a dozen more of my followers who were squatted on the ground with tin plates in their laps and spoons in their hands.

The herder's dogs were busy with the sheep behind a hill, so I rode into the camp unannounced and looked a full half-minute on the tableau before I spoke. Then, when I had begun at the head of the line of plate-holders and denounced all my men as traitors and double-crossers, they still kept their eyes on the kettle and paid no attention to my ravings. As for the sheepherder, he danced about the kettle in an agony of apprehension, and, just as I had begun to tell him of the things that would happen to him and his sheep if he did not start for the dead line at once, he stuck the big spoon into the kettle and yelled:

"She ees done! Now eat, friends."

Almost before I knew it a plate and spoon had been put into my hands and the sheepherder had ladled something hot and tempting from the interior of that kettle. I had eaten sheepherder's mulligan before, but there was magic in this dish in my hands. I hardly noticed that the sheepherder was ladling the mulligan into the tin plates in the hands of my unfaithful cowboys. With the first mouthful of that strange brew, I plumb forgot that anything else in the world mattered. We folks who followed the trails of the first emigrants when the dust in the wagon ruts was fresh have known little of good cooking. We have eaten bacon, day in and day out, until it seemed as if all the porkers in the world had been sacrificed in our behalf. We have had hot bread until I have seen strong men go raving mad at the sight of a Dutch oven. We have dotted the prairie with mounds of shining tin cans—out of which cans we have had not one meal that we could truly say we liked.

Naturally, on account of this sameness of the grub proposition, when any one of us Western men is confronted with a real layout of bangup cooking, he is apt to act like a person who has eaten a nosebag full of loco. He loses his head completely, and all he can think of is his chance of getting another helping.

That's just what happened to me when that sheepherder shoved the plateful of mulligan into my hands. I had intended ordering him off the range and seeing that he stepped lively, but when I got a smell of that mulligan I forgot all the thoughts I was harboring about lowering the sheepherder's census, and I sat right down at the end of that line of cowboys and proceeded to eat like the rest. For about thirty minutes there wasn't anything to be heard but the scraping of plates, and sighs of joy. Once in a while some puncher would call:

"Fill her up again, Frenchy—that's a good guy!"

And the sheepherder just danced up and down the line, grabbing plates as fast as they were empty and filling them up again from that big kettle. When I couldn't eat any more I looked at the gang and the gang looked at me, but my look must have been a hangdog sort of an attempt at sternness, for I noticed that even little Davy stared back as sassy as a camp-robbing jaybird. They knew I was as deep in the matter as they were, and they waited around, as bold as brass, to see what I was going to do. As a matter of fact, I didn't just know. I did feel that I ought to fire that sheepherder right off the range. While I was debating the matter his sheep were right there in plain sight, eating my fodder at the rate of a dollar a minute. I started to reach for my gun, but compromised at drawing out my jackknife and whittling a toothpick. Then I sat there and picked my teeth and looked first at my cowpunchers who had betrayed me, and then at the sheepherder—and by the looks on all their faces I knew they had me.

Well, the upshot of it all was that I agreed to let that sheepherder stay on my range as long as he liked, provided we could come over to his camp and eat mulligan about three times a week. I never thought I'd give a square foot of grazing ground to any sheep outfit, but I'd have agreed to let that sheepherder graze out every acre I controlled, I guess, if it was only a question of getting more of that magic mulligan. For that it was magic mulligan every one in our outfit agreed. I was sure of it, and the boys took a vote on it in the bunkhouse, and every one said it was uncanny, and that no ordinary human being could ever cook mulligan like that if he trained a thousand years on a stack of cookbooks higher than the twin buttes.

For seven weeks we lived on magic mulligan. Shorty, the cook, seeing that I turned up my nose at his efforts, just as the rest of the outfit was doing, resigned on the jump. Nobody called him back when he saddled up and rode away from the ranch, after getting his time. We were all dreaming of magic mulligan, and counting the minutes till we could get over to the sheep camp again and eat some more of that French herder's cooking. The ranch business never was run so slack. I couldn't seem to put my heart into it, and neither could the rest of the boys. We loafed, in the saddle and out, and nobody talked much about anything, tho each fellow knew that the other was just thinking mulligan.

Finally, when we pelted over to the sheep camp one day late in September, the herder and the sheep were gone. We could see that the camp mover had been there, and we followed the trail a few miles, till it got way off our range, and then we turned home, the most dejected lot of men that ever humped over saddle horns. It was a week before we could eat enough of ordinary cooking to keep a prairie dog alive, and it was a solid month before any of us quit dreaming of sheepherder's mulligan. Little Davy, the horse wrangler, would ride over to twin buttes, where the sheep camp used to be, and he'd stand there and sniff and sniff, for he swore the smell of that mulligan was still hanging round in the atmosphere just like perfume.

Ten years later, when I had sold out the bulk of my grazing land to dry farmers at agricultural prices, and had started on a little jaunt around the world to celebrate, I picked out something with a foreign name on the bill of fare at a big hotel in New York, and the waiter brought me a dish that was first cousin to sheepherder's mulligan. After I'd eaten it I bribed everybody from the waiter to the foreman of the dining corral to take me to the kitchen and introduce me to the cook. I was some disappointed when I saw him, for he was fat instead of tall, and he did not have a goatee. I had some difficulty in making him understand why I had shot all the rules of the hotel to pieces in coming out in the kitchen to see him, but, when I finally got it thru his head that the dish I had just had reminded me of a magic concoction which had been made by a fellow countryman of his, I never saw a man go so near insane without bringing the alienists about his ears.

"Mon Dieu!" he shrieked, waving his hands like an Indian lookout. "Eet mus' have been ze gr-r-reat, ze gr-r-rand De Julien himself zat you had discovair. De Julien was ze king of chefs in Paris. From him I learn all I know. He come to America, under what you call ze cloud. A miserable garcon De Julien haf to kill wiz an iron spoon. A trifle—yet zis man of genius haf to flee. I hear of him in New York, but when I come ze gr-r-reat De Julien ees gone. I hear he haf gone to ze West. Eet mus' be he zat you men who drive ze cow haf found. Mon Dieu, to sink of ze gr-r-reat, ze gr-r-rand De Julien a chaperon unto ze sheep! And zis what you call ze mulligan is ragout—ze masterpiece of ze gr-r-reat, ze gr-r-rand De Julien. Ten years did I work for him, and each year De Julien tells me one part more—some new ingredient—to put in ze ragout. Five years more and I would have known ze secret entire—but five parts still are lacking. Five thousand francs would I gif from my savings to know how to make ze De Julien ragout entire—ze same which you and your men who ze cow poonch have eaten in ze camp of ze sheep—Mon Dieu! To dream of ze gr-r-reat, zo gr-r-rand De Julien so low in fortune as to guard ze silly sheep!"

I stayed at that hotel three months instead of going around the world. The mulligan was just near enough to the De Julien article to keep me interested. One day the hotel proprietor handed me a note which read:

"Farewell, friend! I go to find De Julien!"

The cook had lit out for the West, on the trail of his idol. I felt like following him in the search, but somehow I knew that it wouldn't be any use. I was dead sure that De Julien never would turn up again. But if any one ever does taste a sheepherder's mulligan that makes him hear the rustle of fairy wings at the first mouthful, I wish he would let me know. I'd spend the top market price of a shipment of grass-fed steers any time to get within hailing distance once more of the great, the grand De Julien.

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The Blossom Remains.

Bacon—"Crimsonbeak says his wife keeps his nose to the grindstone."

Egbert—"Well, it doesn't seem to wear the red off of it."

The Assurance of Him.

Betty—"The fortune teller says I am going to marry money."

Jack—"Good! Did she say how I was going to make it?"

A CASE OF SWIFT JUSTICE

The Midnight Oil.

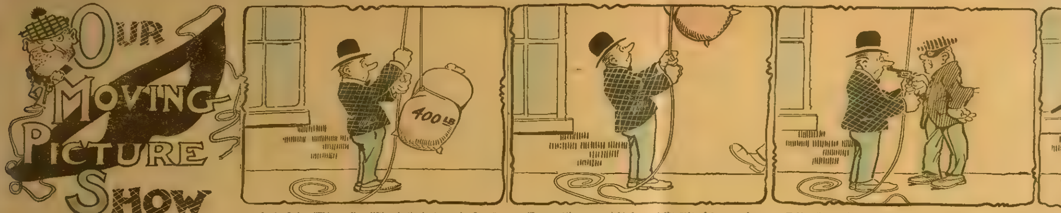
"So your son's in college, eh? Burning the midnight oil, I s'pose."

"Well—er—yes; but I've an idea—er—that it's gasoline."

She Wasn't Particular.

Butcher—"Will you have a round steak, ma'am?"

Mrs. Youngbride—"I don't care what shape it is, so it's tender."



Lucky Luke—"This sandbag lifting is the best exercise I ever found. By hoisting this up and down twenty times a day——

"I am cutting my weight down at the rate of ten pounds a week and hardening my muscles, and——"

Holdup Harry—"Hands up, yeh long-nosed sucker! If yeh know what's good fer yeh elevate yer flippers."

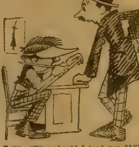
'Lucky Luke—'Sure thing, me gold bar-[illegible] [illegible] be agreeable to others.'' (Biff! Bang! Wow!)

Money vs. Happiness.

"Money doesn't always bring happiness."

"That may be true enough; but it's one of the things we all prefer to learn by personal experience."

◆



Tellit—"Why should I lend you $2?"

Asker—"Because I didn't ask for ten. Have you no sense of gratitude?"

◆

The Nervous Groom.

Everything was in readiness. The groom, best man and the minister were gathered in the vestry. The organist began to play and the minister started for the door.

"Wait one moment, doctor," called the nervous groom. "Is it the right or left hand the ring goes on?"

"The left," hurriedly replied the minister.

"And, doctor, is—is it kisstomary to cuss the bride?"

The Poor Parson.

The parson's wife was tireless in discouraging the use of tobacco. According to the good lady it was the weed which made a veritable wilderness of the rose garden of life.

"Well, Annie," she remarked to one of the village lasses about to get married, "I hope your chosen is one of the non-chimney variety—does not smoke."

"He ain't what you'd call a slave to the habit, ma'am," replied the girl, "but he ain't exactly a stranger to it. I don't feel called on to put a stop to it, neither. You see, I want him to be happy and comfortable about the house when we're married."

"Surely he would be just as happy without that dreadful tobacco," advanced the lady.

"P'r'aps he would, ma'am, and p'r'aps he wouldn't," came the answer. "Anyhow, I wouldn't like him to keep on findin' jobs out o' sight every few minutes, then come in eatin' corfy berries, like the poor parson."

◆

Identified.

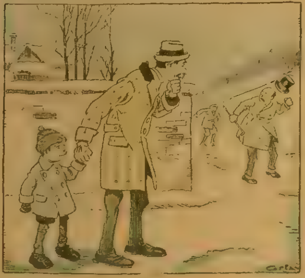
It is said that Mr. Asquith has only once been known to laugh outright when on a public platform. The record making occasion was at a political meeting in Scotland. The former premier was constantly being interrupted, one of the chief hecklers being a farmer wearing a large straw hat. Suddenly from some one in the hall came a very personal remark concerning Mr. Asquith.

"Who said that?" he demanded quickly.

There was sudden silence. Then a man in the audience stood up, and, pointing to the farmer with the straw hat, shouted:

"It was him wi' the coo's breakfast on his head!"

The reply was altogether too much for Mr. Asquith and he had to join in the general roar of laughter.



"Pa, what does tempting fate mean?"

"Tempting fate, my son, means wearing a high hat in snowballing time."

PASTORAL.

There's a little lone house on top of a hill,
And a crooked road leading down,
Past the fields below and a little old mill,
And on to a little old town.

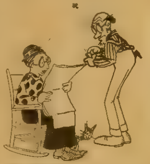
And a little old woman waits all alone,
In the little old house and gray,
And, her little old ear to the telephone,
She hears what the neighbors say.

Her little old man to town has gone
On his little old sturdy legs,
He hiked away at the little old dawn,
With a little old dozen eggs.

He took the fruit of the little old hen,
To the little old town, so far,
To trade 'em off—but he'll come again
In a little old motor car!

And the little old woman and little old man
Will rest their little old legs,
For they can afford a car, they can,
For little old eggs is eggs!

◆



Aunt Hett[illegible]—"Sakes alive! I don't believe no woman could ever be'n so fat."

Uncle Hiram—"What y' readin' now, Hetty?"

Aunt Hetty—"Why, this paper tells about an English woman what lost 2,000 pounds."

■

As Man to Man.

"Oh, it's a hard life, that of the collector of overdue payments."

Mr. Brokerby Bailoff arrived the other day at the flat of that young spendthrift, Reginald Darnsocks. He knocked at the door. It was opened by a manservant.

"Is Mr. Darnsocks at home?"

"Yes, sir. Will you walk in? I'll tell him you're here."

"Good! Thank the powers, I'm going to see my money at last!"

"Excuse me, sir," said the manservant, "but I fear you are laboring under a misapprehension. I ask you, as man to man, is it likely that Mr. Darnsocks would be at home if he had any money? I ask you!"

◆

Poetic Theme.

"I read your 'Ode to Milady's Hair.'"

"Well?" said the poet.

"I thought maybe we could hire you to write an advertisement in poetry for our hair goods department. That's where she bought that hair."

◆

Everything But.

"If a man has the price he can get anything he wants and the way he wants it."

"Don't know about that. There's the medium soft boiled egg."

The Sexton's Bright Idea.

Here is the story of a gravedigger who, after hard toil at a grave, found all his labor in vain owing to the soil slipping and almost filling in the grave again.

After indulging in such language as a church sexton might reasonably use, he got a bright idea.

Placing his cap and jacket near the edge of the grave and hiding his spade he forthwith proceeded to hide himself.

In a few minutes up came a visitor to the graveyard. Seeing the fallen grave and the cap and jacket he raised an alarm that the sexton was buried alive. Brawny arms and spades were soon forthcoming and in a short time the grave was once more dug out, but no sexton was found.

Their perplexity gave way to indignation when the sexton emerged from a clump of trees with a pleased grin on his face and thanked them!

Has It.

Wifey—"I don't know where that child got his dreadful temper from—not from me, I'm sure."

Hubby—"No, my dear, you certainly haven't lost any of yours."

◆

Old and New.

"The old-fashioned idea was that a wife should be a helpmate."

"And the new that a husband is a dancing partner."

Considerable Effect.

The reply of a farmer (according to his own account) to a tax collector whose receipt he had lost, who asked for payment a second time, was somewhat forcible.

"Would you believe it, when I told him I had paid it once, and would not pay it again, the scoundrel began to abuse me?"

"What did you do?" asked his friend.

"Why, I remonstrated with him."

"And to what effect?"

"Well, I don't exactly know," was the reply, "but—the poker was bent."

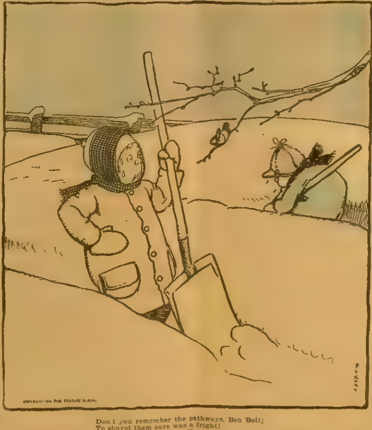
◆

Industry.

"Bliggins says he got on by burning the midnight oil."

"Well, keeping late hours did help him some. He danced all night three or four times a week till finally he met a rich girl and married her."

"BEN BOLT"---The Kid That You Were Yourself.



Don't you remember the pathways, Ben Bolt;
To shovel them sure was a fright!
Pa said "Keep 'em clean!" and, wasn't it mean?
They'd snow full or blow full each night!

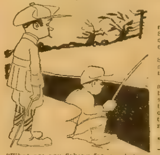
REMEMBER METHUSELAH.

It never does a bit of good
To break your memory's back
By loading it with woes you should
Have left along the track.
Of hard luck you may have a lot
But just the same, my friend,
You've lived thru all you've had; why not
Forget it in the end?

Forgetting's easy, anyway
If troubles you have had,
Just simply take the stand that they
Were never very bad.
That now you see there's joy ahead
And every present day
Is so much gain before you're dead
And duly tucked away.

Methuselah, beyond a doubt,
Could well have wailed of woe.
His span of life was measured out
Nine hundred years or so.
You may be very sure that he
Denied himself this wrong
Of treasuring his woes, or he
Would not have lived so long!

◆



"What are you fishing for, [illegible]?"

"Fish."

"What kind of fish?"

"Fresh."

◆

They Found Out.

George and Ethel were married a few weeks ago and returned from their honeymoon to a ducky little bungalow garnished thruout with the usual valuable but useless silverware and jewelry which kind friends shower upon the newly married.

The day after their arrival two tickets for a downtown theater reached them, accompanied by a little [illegible] note bearing the simple message "Guess who sent them?" They found it impossible to identify the donor, but nevertheless decided to use them.

At the end of a pleasant evening they returned home to find the place stripped of everything. On the dining-room table lay another little scented note bearing the legend: "Now you know."

◆

Too Truthful.

Grocer—"The boy you [illegible] won't do at all."

Customer—"What has he been up to?"

Grocer—"I gave him a notice to stick up, 'All the delicacies of the season will be found inside,' and he pasted it on the rubbish barrel."

◆

The Tardy Singer.

"Trimmins has a first-rate voice," said the critic at the concert, "but he always comes in behind time."

"Yes," replied the man who lends money. "I guess it's force of habit. Trimmins' notes are always overdue."

Avoiding Repetition.

The reporter carried to the copy reader's desk the story on which he had toiled two hours. It was an account of the adventures of a cat that, thru the mistake of a rural postmaster, had been crated and shipped by parcel post to the city postoffice.

"It's mighty hard," he confessed, "to write up to all the rules I learned at college, particularly that one about avoiding repetition."

The copy reader glanced thru the narrative. The first sentence mentioned the fact that a handsome tortoiseshell cat had been received at the local postoffice. In the next sentence the reporter had avoided repetition by calling the cat "puss." Then she became successively a tabby, an animal, a feline and a pet. Then the reporter's overworked vocabulary put forth a final spurt and the item finished triumphantly:

"When the slats were removed from the top, the contents of the crate were found to be suffering from hunger and nearly dead from thirst."

■

The Clever Scots.

She was a pert flapper, and at the dinner party she was taken in by a young Scotsman who had a high opinion of his own mental capacity. The talk turned on the subject of the Scot abroad.

"I've often heard," said the lady, "that Scotsmen who leave their country are, generally speaking, much cleverer than those who stay at home."

"Oh, yes!" replied the Scot, with an attempt at wit. "You see, the reason is that at every outlet there are persons stationed who examine all [illegible] pass, so that, for the honor of the country, no one is allowed to leave who is not able to uphold his own and his country's dignity."

"Oh, then," she said, with [illegible] smile, "you were smuggled, I suppose!"

Long Wait Ahead.

He—"Do you believe in love in a cottage?"

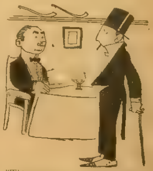
She—"Decidedly not!"

He—"How about love in a palace?"

She—"Oh, Jack, this is so sudden!"

He—"Well, it won't be if we've got to wait until I earn the palace."

◆



"Why aren't you eating, old top?"

"I'm on a diet."

"What's the trouble?" [illegible]

"Had an operation on my allowance."

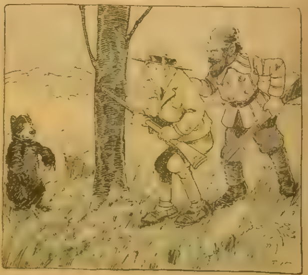
◆

Rather Expensive.

"I kept the goldfish for them while they were away. Found it expensive, tho."

"Fish food costs but little."

"It wasn't the food. They kept dying off and I had to be constantly buying new ones. I figure that I replaced those [illegible] four times."



[illegible]—"There's your b'ar! Aim low and it ought to fetch him."

Cholly—"Fetch him? Gweat Scott! I don't want him coming any nearer."

In Bloody Mary's Days

Or, The Nottingham Maid

By T. C. Harbaugh

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CHAPTER XV.

"I WANT this man! I must have him. Think ye that this varlet is to escape my meshes? I will give half my kingdom for him! Go out and bring him to me! I am King Hal's daughter, and I have sworn to have his head!" It was Queen Mary in a rage. Her face was almost the color of fire, and she stamped her pretty foot in the heat of her passion. She was speaking to her chief marshal, a man named Roger Coverly, whose fame as a man catcher for the headsman's block was known far beyond the realm.

Coverly made a humble obeisance, and when he raised his head he caught the eye of his royal mistress.

"Remember!" cried Mary, "I want the man who went to Stirling House with Jeanne Stafford! I will not sleep till you have netted the vulture."

Coverly withdrew somewhat crestfallen, for he knew the difficulties that beset his mission. Outside the corridor of the Queen's private room he stopped and clinched his gloved hands as he glanced at the door.

"It is a needle in the London haystack," he grumbled. "The Queen sends me upon an almost impossible mission. I have ransacked the town for the man she wants. When I think I am about to lay my hands upon him he vanishes like a ghost. Curse Mary Tudor and all her kin!" and with this he strode from the palace, his head cast down and a seam of trouble across his brow.

Coverly had been baffled for once. Where was Gilbert Montjoy hiding? Who was secreting this most wanted of men? What fortune was playing the cards for him?

Before the dawn things looked better for the chief marshal. There came to him thru the gossip of a man in a cabaret the story of Gilbert and Tyrus' invasion of Sir John Talbot's house. Coverly listened with all the eagerness of a man catcher. Could the man he wanted be the same whom the Queen had foredoomed to death?

In a few moments he had a clew. It was the same man, but he had had an accomplice. It set him on a new trail. It was the same night of Tyrus' adventure with Captain Blunderblade, and Coverly's heart seemed to leap with hope.

He went forthwith to Sir John's house, and heard from Lady Talbot's lips the story of the fight there. But not a word about Eleanor Selkirk.

Now he had a description of the two men. He doubted not that the younger was the man he wanted, and he gathered up a lot of underlings and scattered them thruout London on the lookout.

One of his hirelings found a fat man crouching in the shadow of London Bridge on the farther side. It was Jack Blunderblade, who was loath to quit the city. He pulled the fellow to his feet and took him into an alehouse. When Blunderblade found his tongue he railed out against Gilbert and his companion.

"The man from Nottingham hides in Red Robin Inn!" cried Jack. "I have seen him there. But I'm under oath," he added.

"Oath or no oath, you go with me!" thundered Coverly. "We must catch this man Montjoy tonight."

Jack did not care to go back to the inn, for he had not forgotten the treatment he had received at the hands of Mistress Bull. He shivered when he thought of her.

But back he went, and when the little room was searched it was evident that Gilbert had sought another field, for his luggage was gone and Mistress Bull looked at Jack as if she yearned for another bout with him.

"That woman was born in a jungle," whispered Jack, when he found himself out of her territory. "Why, big as I am, I was a baby in her claws. I went down the stair like a falling rocket, and you would have seen the dent my head made in the floor if you had but looked."

Coverly smiled and looked away.

"Your head looks hard enough to make an impression in a bed of steel," he observed.

"Marry, it does, and it feels that way," whined Jack.

Meantime Gilbert was still searching for Lucy. Tyrus had rejoined him with his story of the discomfiture of Blunderblade, and the twain were once more together.

Once they passed within a few yards of the place where Lucy was the captive of Rupert Searoll, but fortune did not favor them.

"Let us go back to the new nest and pull our wits together," suggested Gilbert. "I am all at sea, but maybe we can lift the veil by a little hard thinking."

They entered an alley, and Gilbert took a key from his pocket and opened a narrow door. They climbed a flight of steps and entered a scantily-furnished apartment, where a light was struck after the curtain had been pulled down.

But they had been seen. The eyes of the hunting falcons were upon them. These human birds of prey darted off, and in a few moments had come in contact with Coverly.

The chief marshal's heart thumped hard in his breast. He had six sworded fellows with him, but Jack Blunderblade was not among them. His fear of old Tyrus' threat had caused him to slip away at the first opportunity.

"Hark!" said Tyrus, in an undertone. "I hear a noise like the presence of men."

Gilbert snuffed the light and stood in the dark.

"They have found us, Master Gilbert!" cried Tyrus. "'Tis hard to escape Queen Mary's wolves."

"Bar the door!" commanded Montjoy.

"There's no bar but the lock, good master," was the reply.

"Then for the roof!" said Gilbert, and they crossed the room, where they found a window which looked out upon a sloping roof.

There were heavy footsteps on the stairs, and Gilbert threw himself over the sill, to be followed by Tyrus, who landed beside him. Crouching on the roof, they heard the crash of a broken door and looked each other in the face.

Over London hung a brilliant crescent, revealing to Gilbert the roofs of the surrounding antique houses.

"Come!" cried he to Tyrus. "It cannot be far to the ground, and liberty is better than the block."

They slid to the eaves, and Gilbert dropped first, to be followed by his friend. They landed in a garden half grown in weeds, and surrounded by a stone wall. The room they had just left was filled with the voices of infuriated men. The chase was on.

"The wall! The wall!" exclaimed Tyrus darting forward.

"There may be a gateway."

But there was none. There were the forms of men on the roof, men with swords in their hands, still crying out that they had found their prey.

Tyrus reached up for the top of the wall, but tho his arms were long, his hands fell short of the level.

Already the chief marshal and his pack were in the garden, and Gilbert and Tyrus had been entrapped in a cul-de-sac. There was nothing to do but fight. They placed their backs against the wall and awaited their hunters.

A firmer hand never clutched a rapier's hilt than Montjoy's, and he looked at old Tyrus, whose lips were welded with determination and whose eyes were fixed on the men coming thru the brown weeds.

For a brief moment there was silence between the lions of London and their prey, but suddenly the place became a bedlam.

"Make no mistake," said Gilbert to Tyrus. "It is a fight for life and Luc[illegible]"

Coverly's giant figure was seen above the reeds, and the heads of his band were not missing. All at once the chief marshal halted and addressed the men at the old wall.

"In the Queen's name," cried he, "I call upon you to surrender!"

The demand drew the friends closer together. The moon was in their faces, soft and glowing, and a light wind stirred the tops of the frost-nipped stems.

"In Queen Mary's name!" repeated Coverly, advancing a step. "We want both of you, but especially Gilbert Montjoy of Nottingham."

Gilbert's lip curled defiantly.

"I am here!" he answered in firm tones.

"And so is Tyrus from the same country," cried the old man.

There was a parley among the hunters, and then all rushed forward. Coverly had the heat of a lion in his heart, but he met a blade as keen as his own and toppled against his companions. It was now point to point; sparks flew in showers from the embattling blades and Gilbert's heritage of steel was speaking for itself.

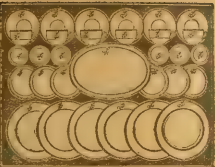
Old Tyrus stood like a lion at bay, with blood coursing down his brown cheeks, but his sword did not cease its terrible play. Suddenly there were voices behind and above them. Gilbert looked up and grated his teeth. More of Coverly's band were clambering over the top of the wall and were dropping to the ground like scavengers of doom.

CHAPTER XVI.

VIEWED in the moonlight the figures of the new reinforcements seemed innumerable, when, in fact, there were not more than eight. They forced Gilbert and Tyrus to change their position and battle with a new enemy.

This only lent the two friends more courage, and in a second they were in the midst of flashing steel, which they parried, and now and then sent a foe to the ground never again to help England's Queen.

Such rapid play discomfited the assailants, and when the moon, as if to assist the hunted twain, crept behind a cloud, Gilbert and his companion made a dash for the house and, flinging open



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a door, reached the street with the yelling pack at their heels.

It was a noisy pursuit, and more than one window was thrown open and heads were thrust out to get at the reason of the commotion.

"This way!" cried Tyrus, plucking Gilbert's arm and turning into a dark alley. "It is any port in a storm, I say."

The gloom received them with open arms; they rushed into the unknown and were gone. The ravenous pack, no longer headed by the chief marshal, stopped at the mouth of the yawning alley and feared to enter. Some of them were bleeding from sword wounds and had no intention of getting more if they could help it

Half an hour later a man crept from the shadow of a building and looked around. It was old Tyrus, and on his face was a grim smile. He drew back into the darkness, and presently he and Gilbert came forth and moved away.

"I wonder how many we slashed?" asked the old man, looking into Gilbert's face.

"A goodly number, methinks," answered Montjoy, returning the grimace. "It was a good fight, Tyrus, and the heritage of steel has been nobly baptized."

That instant Tyrus paused, and said in low tones:

"Fortune is favoring us, Master Gilbert. There goes Rupert Searoll!"

Gilbert started at the mention of the name.

On the opposite side of the narrow street a man was swaggering along with a sword at his side. For Gilbert one glance was enough.

"'Tis the rascal for certain!" cried he, and the two dashed across the way.

"Stop!" rang from Gilbert's lips, and before the man could draw a rapier was at his throat.

"Out with the truth," continued Gilbert, keeping his blade where he held it. "Where is Lucy Lallire?"

The hue of ashes came down over Searoll's face.

"Where have you hidden the lass whom you deceived with some specious lie? Be quick about it, man."

But the white lips did not open.

"Thrust him thru, Master Gilbert!" cried Tyrus. "Let there be one less rat in London."

"No, Tyrus. We want the truth first," was the answer. "Lead us to the hiding-place."

Searoll put on a desperate face and fell back. In a second he was in Tyrus' grip, which was that of steel, despite his old arms.

Rupert was forced against a door, which gave way, and he and his captor fell headlong into a dark hallway. A cry was raised in the unknown house and two women rushed in upon the scene. One carried a light, and both stared at the struggling men on the bare floor.

"Help! help!" cried Tyrus' man.

The two women at once fell upon Tyrus and literally tore the old swordsman's foe from his grasp.

"Quick to the door ahead!" shouted one of the pair. "We will stand off these cutthroats."

Rupert needed no second suggestion, but darted forward, minus his sword, and was gone.

"I'll call the night-watch!" cried one of the twain. "It's nice work you're at, trying to rob a gentleman on the streets of London!"

Gilbert was incensed beyond his power to keep down his chagrin. The woman who threatened to summon the night-watch was seized at once and held against the wall till her face became purple.

"A gentleman, eh?" hissed Gilbert. "You have freed the worst wretch in the realm."

Thru the near door darted the two in search of the missing man, but their hunt was futile. Rupert was well out of their clutches.

"Luck is against us," said the crestfallen Montjoy. "We have missed the opportunity of our lives."

It was true. They dared not return to the new nest for fear it would again be invaded by the enemy, and therefore they went in an opposite direction.

The night was now well spent, but at a little window looking out upon the lights of London stood Lucy Lallire, her white face half buried in her hands. She was still the captive of her rejected lover.

All at once she wheeled about and turned the key in the door, which had two locks, the key to one being in the possession of Rupert Searoll. She had scarcely done so when she heard the click of a key in the lower lock, but the door would not yield to the person outside.

She heard the deep curses of the baffled one, and fearing he might force the door, she seized a heavy chair, and with all her strength struck the window bars again and again. Hope lent her power. She continued to belabor the bars till one yielded with a snap, and then another and another. Another stroke dashed the window into bits, and then, unmindful of the sharp glass, she clambered over the scant sill and ran across the roof

She thought of nothing but the man pounding on the door, and when she reached the edge of the roof she took one look down into the darkness, and, trusting to Providence, let herself fall.

Rendered half unconscious by the fall, she lay for a few minutes on the ground, and then pulled herself together. The moon showed her a part of her surroundings, and she darted off at random, coming in contact with a gate which led she knew not whither. To pull open this gate, which was an old one and not locked, was the work of a second, and a serpentine street received her.

She shrank from the light of the burning cressets, for deadly fear still tugged at her heartstrings. Darkness was best for her.

But she dared not remain where she was, and she ran across the street to where the sign of an alehouse was swinging noisily in the night breeze. She wanted to find the way back to Regent street and to the house of Mistress Foley, from which Rupert Searoll had enticed her with a lie.

The door of the little alehouse swung open and a hulk of a man came out. Lucy uttered a cry of joy. In a flash her hand closed on the man's arm. He started as tho a rapier's point had touched his breast.

"Tell me how I can get to Regent street," she begged, with throbbing heart. "I am lost in London——"

The big fellow interrupted with an exclamation of surprise.

"You're a pretty wench," cried he, with a leer. "And why do you want to go to Regent street?"

"It is my home. I was enticed from it by a lie. I—I—I will be safe there till Gilbert Montjoy comes."

"Gilbert Montjoy, eh? I know the man!"

"I bless you, then!" cried Lucy.

"I want to find him, too. My name is Jack Blunderblade!"

Lucy shrank back with a cry of horror.

CHAPTER XVII.

IT IS no wonder that Lucy Lallire recoiled when she found herself in the presence of Captain Blunderblade. She already knew enough of him to feel fear gripping her heart, and she drew back in terror. The leering rascal seized her wrist and held her in his obnoxious power. Would he turn her over to Rupert Searoll and thus prevent her freedom?

"Let me go!" she pleaded, looking into his eyes, in which she saw no mercy. "You have no right to hold me. Your name is enough for me. I must go to Regent street——"

"When I am ready to let you go, yes," was the heartless answer. "Old Jack likes pretty women——"

"Vulture!" exclaimed Lucy, breaking his sentence, and by the exertion of her powers she jerked loose so suddenly that Blunderblade staggered back.

In another second the girl was flying from the scene with the partially recovered fellow at her heels.

The danger that impelled lent her strength, but all the time she heard the footsteps of the burly villain behind her and, caring little now for the shelter that might await her, she hastened on, white-faced and desperate.

In rounding a corner she almost ran into the hands of the night-watch, and upon looking she saw to her relief that her pursuer had blundered into the band. Of course, she did not wait to see what the result would be, but continued her flight till she was ready to sink from exhaustion.

Suddenly, out of the night, arose the bulk of a house, toward which she bent her steps.

The place offered seclusion, and she jerked the brazen knocker with the nerve of despair. Footsteps inside told her that her summons had been heard, and when the door opened she flung herself inside, to be clutched by a handsomely dressed woman, who held her fast.

"What storm drove you in here?" flashed the proud-looking dame, bringing the pleading girl close to her.

Lucy looked around the lighted hall with a shiver.

"I am Lucy Lallire," she said. "I have been pursued by a human brute, and——"

"A little race with some persistent love, mayhap," smiled the woman. "Know ye, girl, where you are?"

Lucy shook her head.

"This is Sir John Talbot's house, and I am Lady Talbot."

If Lucy had known what had lately happened in that house she would have fled forthwith. Gilbert's and Tyrus' fight there had not reached her ears, and the place seemed a haven especially from the wiles of men of the Blunderblade stripe.

She was conducted into a large chamber and commanded to take a chair. Lady Talbot stood over her, eying her like a falcon. "Meseems you don't belong to London," she abruptly exclaimed. "You're a country lass."

"Yes, madam, from Nottingham."

"Ah! And what brought you to London, pray?"

"To find my lover, who came down many days ago to get his legacy"

"And his name is——"

"Gilbert Montjoy"

There was a violent start on Lady Talbot's part. Her face colored, and as

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Quickly transforms the flabby flesh, toneless tissues, and pallid cheeks of weak, anaemic men and women into a perfect glow of health and beauty—Often increases the strength of delicate, nervous, run-down folks 200 per cent in two weeks' time.

New York, N. Y.—It is conservatively estimated that over three million people annually in this country alone are taking Nuxated Iron. Such astonishing results have been reported from its use both by doctors and laymen, that a number of physicians in various parts of the country have been asked to explain why they prescribe it so extensively, and why it apparently produces so much better results than were obtained from the old forms of inorganic iron.

Extracts from some of the letters received are given below:

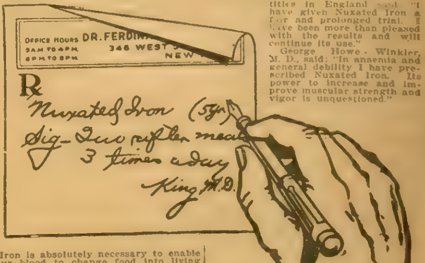
Dr. King, a New York physician and author says: "There can be no vigorous iron men without iron. Pallor means anaemia. Anaemia means iron deficiency. The skin of anaemic men and women is pale. The flesh flabby. The muscles lack tone, the brain fags and the memory fails and they often become weak, nervous, irritable, despondent and melancholy. When the iron goes from the blood of women, the roses go from their cheeks.

In the most common foods of America, the starches, sugars, table syrups, candies, polished rice, white bread, soda crackers, biscuits, macaroni, spaghetti, tapioca, sago, farina, degerminated cornmeal, no longer is iron to be found. Refining processes have removed the iron of Mother Earth from these impoverished foods, and silly methods of home cookery, by throwing down the waste-pipe the water in which our vegetables are cooked is responsible for another grave iron loss.

Therefore, if you wish to preserve your youthful vim and vigor to a ripe old age, you must supply the iron deficiency in your food by using some form of organic iron just as you would use salt when your food has not enough salt.

Dr. E. Sauer, a Boston physician who has studied widely in both this country and in prominent European Medical Institutions says: "As I have said a hundred times over, organic iron is the greatest of all strength builders. If people would only throw away habit forming drugs and nauseous concoctions and take Nuxated Iron, I am convinced that the lives of thousands of persons might be saved who now die every year from pneumonia, grippe, consumption, kidney, liver and heart troubles, etc. The real and true cause which started their diseases was nothing more nor less than a weakened condition brought on by lack of iron in the blood."

Not long ago a man came to me who was nearly half a century old and asked me to give him a preliminary examination for life insurance. I was astonished to find him with a blood pressure of a boy of 20 and as full of vigor, vim and vitality as a young man; in fact a young man he really was, notwithstanding his age. The secret, he said, was taking iron—nuxated iron had filled him with renewed life. At 30 he was in bad health; at 46 he was careworn and nearly all in—now at 50, after taking Nuxated Iron, a miracle of vitality and his face beaming with the buoyancy of youth.



Iron is absolutely necessary to enable your blood to change food into living tissue. Without it, no matter how much or what you eat, your food merely passes through you without doing you any good, and as a consequence you become weak, pale and sickly-looking, just like a plant trying to grow in a soil deficient in iron. If you are not strong or well you owe it to yourself to make the following test: see how long you can work or how far you can walk without becoming tired. Next take two five-grain tablets of ordinary nuxated iron three times per day after meals for two weeks. Then test your strength again and see how much you have gained. I have seen dozens of nervous, run-down people who were ailing all the while double their strength and endurance and entirely rid themselves of all symptoms of dyspepsia, liver and other troubles in from ten to fourteen days' time simply by taking iron in the proper form. And this after they had in some cases been doctoring for months without obtaining any benefit. But don't take the old forms of reduced iron, iron acetate or tincture of iron simply to save a few cents. The iron demanded by Mother Nature for the red coloring matter in the blood of her children is, alas! not that kind of iron. You must take iron in a form that can be easily absorbed and assimilated to do you any good, otherwise it may prove worse than useless. Many an athlete and prize-fighter has won the day simply because he knew the secret of great strength and endurance and filled his blood with iron before he went into the affray; while many another has gone down in inglorious defeat simply for the lack of iron."

Dr. T. Alphonsus Wallace a physician of many years experience in this country and who has been given many honorary titles in England said "I have given Nuxated Iron a fair and prolonged trial. I have been more than pleased with the results and will continue its use."

George Howe-Winkler, M. D., said: "In anaemia and general debility I have prescribed Nuxated Iron. Its power to increase and improve muscular strength and vigor is unquestioned."

Dr. James late of the United States Public Health Service says, "Patients in an enervated and devitalized state of health—those, for instance, convalescing from protracted fevers, those suffering from a long-standing case of anaemia, all such people in my opinion, need iron. Of late, there has been brought to my attention, Nuxated Iron. In practice, I have found this an ideal restorative and upbuilding agent in these cases above mentioned.

NOTE—Nuxated Iron, which is prescribed and recommended above by physicians in such a great variety of cases, is not a patent medicine [illegible] easily assimilated, [illegible] make them black, [illegible] the contrary it is [illegible] least double your strength [illegible] in ten days' time. It is di[illegible] druggists

suddenly went white again. She stooped over the pallid girl in the chair, and Lucy could see the flash that lit up her dark eyes.

"Surely you did not come to London alone?"

"No, old Tyrus Macklin accompanied me."

"I see! I see!" ejaculated Lady Talbot. "I'll give you shelter."

"Then I can get back to Regent street?" cried Lucy, hope springing up in her heart.

"Perhaps. London is full of evil men, and a young girl from the country may fall into the net of danger."

"I have already learned this. I thank you for your kind offer of asylum. But I trust I will not trouble you long."

It was not long before Lucy found herself in a richly furnished chamber, in one corner of which stood a bed with silk hangings. She was dazzled by the glare of riches and longed to try the couch, for her adventures had weakened her.

Down in one of the lower rooms Lady Talbot stood before her husband with triumph in her eyes.

"I say we've netted a new bird," she was saying. "I have housed the sweetheart of the man who calls himself Gilbert Montjoy, whom the Queen wants so badly."

"What! The man who made such havoc here with his rapier?"

"The same, dear."

"But the other woman upstairs? We must see to it that the two do not get together."

"Trust me for that," was the reply.

"In which room did you put the girl from Nottingham?"

"In the red chamber."

"And the Countess is in the blue room. They're pretty near each other, methinks."

"But the walls are thick and the Nottingham girl ere this is sound asleep."

Sir John fell into deep thought for a moment. Then he looked up at his [illegible]

"Now," said he, with glowing countenance, "if we could but entice this Gilbert Montjoy to the house by a stratagem we might serve the Queen to our greatness."

"Let us think it over," returned Lady Talbot. "Fortune has unwittingly set the trap for us. We have the bait in our hands; the trap is all we need."

"Such a bait as the girl will lure Montjoy anywhere. Queen Mary would almost give her crown for that man. Aha! The girl will seal his doom."

Already Lucy had fallen asleep on the silken couch. So deep were her slumbers that she did not hear the chimes in the nearest steeple. Hers was the sleep of innocence, and in her dreams she saw herself in Gilbert's arms.

Suddenly she found herself sitting upright behind the curtains of the couch. A light was burning on the table and its brilliance revealed to her the beauties of the chamber.

As she reflected upon her "good fortune," she distinctly heard a series of impatient raps. In another second she was out of bed, listening with her heart in her throat and an ear glued to a certain spot in the wall. The taps were resumed.

"Who is in there?" said a voice full of anxiety and pleading. It seemed to come from far away, but Lucy knew that it came from some one in a chamber beyond the wall.

"I am here," answered Lucy, putting her lips to the wall. "I am Lucy Lallire from Nottingham. I was fleeing from a brute when Lady Talbot took me in."

"Heavens! You are in the spider's web like myself!" came thru the wall.

The words took Lucy's breath. "A spider's web?" she echoed, clutching at her bosom. "It cannot be."

"It is true. I am Eleanor Selkirk, detained, as I verily believe, by the Queen herself in Talbot House. I fancy that all London is looking for me."

Lucy uttered a singular cry. "I have heard of you from the lips of Mistress Foley of Regent street. London has been looking for you, and your father has posted the city."

"Yes. Queen Mary believes that I have stolen from her her hated Spanish husband, and this house has become my prison."

"'Tis a wonder you have not been sent to Tower Hill."

"She hardly dared do that," said the voice beyond the wall. "Bad as she is, there is a point beyond which she fears to go. I came near to being rescued not long ago when two men invaded the house and left blood behind them. From whom were you fleeing when you came to Talbot House?"

"From Captain Blunderblade."

"From such a villain? Well, you have escaped from the frying pan to leap into the fire."

"Then we must escape!"

A laugh sounded in Lucy's ears.

"But how?" exclaimed Lady Selkirk. "How to get out of this lion's den has caused me more than one sleepless night. My door is locked and barred. Once I made the attempt, but failed. Poor girl! We are in the very net of doom."

"But there must be a way," cried Lucy. "Heaven will lead us to it."

"Heaven, you say?" was the bitter cry. "Heaven fights for Queen Mary!"

This strange story will be concluded in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Far From Well.

Little Johnnie Williams was crying hard when he walked into school the other morning, accompanied by his mother.

"Toothache, I suppose, Mrs. Williams?" observed the master, as he noticed the tears running down Johnnie's cheeks.

"No, it ain't toothache," snapped the lady, "that's want o' food and vulgar fractions, that is. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, that you do, settin' a child such things to do. Up before 6 this mornin', the boy was, tryin' to find out before 'e 'ad 'is breakfus' that, supposin' 'e 'ad forty-nine apples and 'e give 'is Uncle George two-sevenths, 'is Aunt Rachel one-seventh, 'is brother Bob three-sevenths and kept the rest 'isself, 'ow many they'd each 'ave."

"Well?"

"It ain't well," continued the lady, "'cos 'e tried to do the sum with marbles 'stead o' apples. Uncle George's lot is in 'is right 'and, and 'e's got fourteen; Aunt Rachel's is in 'is left—she's got seven, and 'es got seven left for 'isself in 'is coat pocket; but 'ow many brother Bob 'ad, 'eaven only knows, 'cos Johnnie put them in 'is mouth and they've got wedged in."

* * *

A Post-Impression.

George Luks, whose strong and splendid paintings of children and old people made a sensation in a Fifth avenue gallery, was talking about the Post-Impressionists.

"But, Luks," said a magazine editor, "what is a post-impressionist?"

"A post-impressionist, my dear fellow, is an artist who aims to give you the post-impression that he has orders for more pictures than he can paint."

THE CHAUFFEUR'S LULLABY.

Velvet roads glide up to meet you,
  Skim beneath and rush away,
Other cars honk-honk to greet you,
  "Babe ahoy!" they cry today.

Hark! The valves sing soft and steady,
  Silent chains run smooth and swift,
Cylinders are cool and ready,
  Steel gears humming as they shift.

Strength of sixty horses rocks you,
  In your tonneau cradle, sweet,
Stanch springs bend so nothing shocks you,
  While the lightning pistons beat.

Ah, in slumber you are stirring,
  Motion fills your dreams with joy;
Yes, that is the motor purring,
  Little mile-a-minute boy!

* * *

Skater's Tactics.

"The weather's warming up," announced the cautious boarder to the table at dinner. "Let's go to Jackson Park and skate."

"Why not go to Smalley's exclusive rink and rub elbows with the upper set?" asked the boarder who worked in a bond house.

"Not enough fresh air," said the cautious boarder. "Besides, there is no great reason why I should get interested in the upper set," he added with a glance at the pretty teacher.

"But the music," continued the bond man.

"Well, the wind sighing thru the trees suits me," said the cautious boarder. "Besides, my realty commissions have been slow the last few weeks, and if I start going with Smalley's set I'll be ruined financially."

"I don't understand," said the bond salesman.

"I'll explain," said the cautious one. "Going to Smalley's rink is one of the most expensive outings I could take. First item, carfare, 10 cents; second, 25 cents to get in; third, 35 cents for skates, then $10 for skates and shoes fastened together, and all your own. Then 50 cents' advance rent on a locker to keep your shoes and skates in, and every time you lose the key to said locker, 25 cents more.

"Next you require a particular kind of hat to skate in, then a skating sweater, later appropriate and practical trousers, then gloves, which three items total $44.66—not including the cost of entertainment if you should meet some of your rich customers there.

"Park skating is the only skating. You don't have to pay carfare when you go to the park, not a cent. A two-mile walk will put new life into you. Then all you need is a good thick pair of trousers and yarn gloves, preferably red, a thingumbob to tie around your ears and there you are!"

"You take a whirl down the course for a mile or so and you come back all warmed up and panting. Down one side of Wooded Island and up the other, under the bridges, past the boathouse you glide, and no one interferes with your progress. The moon comes out, the scenery becomes romantic and your mood sentimental. You drink in barrels of good fresh air, rout the bacteria, and what does it cost you? Not a cent. I'm strong for it."

"You've got it all figured out, haven't you?" said the bond salesman. "Sounds to me as if you're saving for a home. Well, I won't block the choice of the party. What do the rest of you say?"

"I'm in favor of going to the park, too," said the pretty teacher.

"You win," said the bond salesman to the cautious boarder.

* * *

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"Now, I want you to write me a letter every day," said his young wife, departing for a fortnight. In a weak moment he promised to do so.

One day elapsed without a letter. On the second he resorted to a desperate expedient. He summoned a stenographer and dictated one good-sized affectionate letter.

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Three days later the husband received a telegram from his wife. "Will be home on first train. Meet me."

The train arrived. When his wife stepped out he asked:

"What's the matter, my dear?"

The wife said not a word, but walked into the waiting-room. Then she opened her handbag and quietly handed her husband a bunch of letters.

The stenographer had followed his instructions, but had posted all the letters on the same day.

* * *

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Or, LOST ON A RAFT

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CHAPTER III.

ON THE BIG WATER

"ANDY! Oh, Andy!" That was certainly Specs calling out at the top of his shrill voice; and as the turmoil and confusion had to a small degree abated by this time, he managed to make himself heard.

"All right, Specs! I'm still alongside! Keep up your courage; we're getting on famously, don't you see?"

All Specs knew just then was that he had swallowed a gallon, more or less, of nasty water, while they were being knocked about so fiercely; and that, unable to discover his chum at his side, he had been seized with a terrible fear lest Andy might have been carried away by the flood.

Reassured by Andy's words, he began once more to get a grip on himself. The bravery of his chum always had a great influence on Specs; for it was as tho he imbibed a portion of the other's undaunted disposition. He even began to take a little interest in things around him. The churning motion had gradually ceased in a measure, showing that the heavy raft must have been left behind by the advance wave of the flood.

Specs could see a strange sight indeed. The water seemed to stretch farther than he had ever known the river to widen, even during the greatest spring rise on record. He wondered whether it would even top the high bank on which Guilford was built, and if the houses in the lower part of the town would share the fate of those unlucky hencoops and outbuildings that littered the surface of the water.

They must be far below the limits of the town ere this. Specs, straining his eyes, could dimly see the shore thru the mist that covered the flood. It looked strangely distant to his wondering and awed vision, tho this might have been mostly caused by the condition of the atmosphere, as well as the coming of evening.

They seemed to be moving onward as tho in a mill-race. Specs mentally concluded that the pace must be all of twenty miles an hour, tho he did not pretend to be much of a judge. And what appalled him most was the fact that at such a rate of progress they would be carried to the great Mississippi before an hour or two had elapsed. This thought brought new terrors in its train.

Of course, both of them were soaked to the skin, for they had more than once been entirely submerged. They did not give this a thought just then, tho later on, possibly, when the chilly night wind began to blow, they would find themselves shivering until their teeth rattled in their heads.

"Andy!" called out Specs, presently.

"Yes, what is it? I'm right behind you, old fellow."

"Get these ropes off, won't you?" asked the other.

"What's your hurry?" demanded Andy, just as tho he half feared a repetition of their late rough experience, and wished to be on the safe side.

"The worst is past," explained Specs, managing to keep control of his quivering voice at last; "and I mean to help you row ashore, don't you see?"

Andy did not reply immediately. When he did he was working at the ropes, for he had put his knife carefully in his pocket again, under the belief that it might yet turn out to be a most valuable possession.

"Well, to tell the truth, Specs, we're not going to be able to do any more rowing right away," he finally admitted.

"But why not, Andy? By hard pulling we might manage to gain the shore, even if it was many miles below Guilford. Tell me why shouldn't we handle the oars again."

"Just because there aren't any oars now, so far as we're concerned, Specs."

"Oh! Do you mean we've gone and lost them, Andy?" cried the other, in fresh dismay.

"They were torn loose from the rowlocks when we were struck by that avalanche of water, for a fact," the other went on to say, reluctantly.

"But why didn't you fasten them with a piece of the rope, Andy?" demanded Specs.

"Perhaps I would have done that if I'd had enough time, Specs; but you see, I had other fish to fry just then."

And Specs, suddenly remembering how the other's every thought and act had been so generously taken up with trying to secure his safety, Andy having utterly ignored his own well-being, was overwhelmed with confusion.

"Oh! forgive me, Andy!" he cried out, with emotion. "How could you do everything at once—look after a silly fellow like me and the oars at the same time? We're in great luck to be as well off as we are; and no matter what happens I'm going to try and show that I'm grateful."

Presently, when Andy had managed to set him entirely free again, Specs again called out. It seemed just as tho in the dreadful situation that held them in its merciless grip the mere sound of Andy's voice did Specs a world of good. People often chatter in order to try and forget their troubles; but then in this case Specs was also hoping his reliable chum would presently advance some theory which, followed up in practice, might effect their safe landing.

"We must be a long ways below the old town by now, wouldn't you say, Andy?" was his question.

"Yes, miles, I guess," replied the other, "tho it's getting dark so fast, with all those black clouds passing overhead, that I can hardly see the shore any longer. Besides, I'd have some trouble telling just where we are, for you remember, as a rule we've nearly always gone up the river when skating or fishing."

"But Andy, isn't there some way we could help urge the raft in toward the shore?" continued the other, helplessly.

"I'm starting to take off my clothes right now," he was told, "tho it's an awful hard job, with them sticking to me like they do. I'll drop over the side, and by swimming try to urge the raft little by little in toward the shore."

"That's a fine scheme," cried Specs, "and I wish I could help you do the same, Andy! How about it? By holding on to the raft, and kicking like fun, I'd be some little help, wouldn't I?"

"Just you stay where you are, Specs," he was told in the decisive way that, as Specs knew only too well, admitted of no further argument. "If I can't coax the tub to go ashore, what little help you'd give wouldn't amount to a row of beans. Besides, you might lose your grip; and think of the trouble I'd have getting hold of you again. No, stay quiet, and watch me work."

Presently Andy was in the water, and doing his utmost to influence the raft to move ever so slowly toward the friendly bank. He labored with all his strength, and anxious Specs tried to suck in a little hope by making himself believe they were actually moving shoreward, tho the progress was snail-like.

"I believe you're making the raft mind some, Andy!" he would call out now and then, possibly more to encourage his comrade than because he actually counted on the gain; "yes, I'm sure we are a little mite nearer the shore than when you started to swim; tho, of course, that might be a point of land jutting out. Yes, that's what it was, worse luck, Andy, because now—well, I just can't see the shore at all. But then the darkness is getting worse all the time, you know."

"No use trying any longer, Specs," admitted Andy. "I'd keep it up everlastingly if I thought there was the least show, but I don't believe I can push this heavy raft in such a fierce stream, with its cross-currents. I might as well save myself for another chance later on."

At that the boy crawled up on the float and deliberately commenced putting on some of his clothes again. Strange to say, his action gave Specs a new cause for near-panic; because, looking back, he could scarcely remember another occasion when he had known Andy to give up anything he had undertaken. Surely their case must indeed be next to hopeless if he so easily threw up the sponge and admitted that he could do nothing.

They continued to cling to their heaving raft, which was being borne along on the flood with incredible swiftness. Several times the boys saw lights on the shore thru the gloom that had settled down like a pall. These told them that in all probability they were being carried past some other village further down the river.

Just why they should raise their voices and shout as hard as they could neither might have explained if asked; yet it was no doubt the instinctive hope urging them on that at such times of stress lays hold of the human heart; a vague feeling, perhaps, that some man in a boat might chance to be abroad, and would be attracted to their float in time to take them off.

But if any of those ashore heard their frantic appeals there was no answering hail, nor did any life-saving boat put in an appearance. Plainly, then, it looked as if the firm of Andy & Co. might have to depend entirely on their own personal exertions if they expected to come out of this scrape with their lives.

"But can't you think of anything we could do, Andy?" asked Specs, perhaps for the sixth time, tho in his excitement he did not know how he kept on repeating; but then Andy did not get out of patience.

"Just as I said before, Specs," he would reply, soothingly, "I mean to try that swimming game again later on, when the conditions are better, and the water not quite so rough. It doesn't matter much where we land, you see, if only we manage to reach shore at all; because we can always get back, in a farmer's wagon, or aboard a train, when we get money from home by telegraph. So don't worry about the distance, or anything like that, Specs. All we want to think about is making a landing somewhere, somehow."

"I'm afraid we're going to have a nasty storm to add to our troubles, Andy!" suggested the other, after another period had elapsed, and they still fairly flew down the swollen river, as if given wings.

"Let her storm!" laughed Andy, harshly. "Much harm it can do a couple of fellows who are already soaked to the skin. And as for making the Maurice River rise any, it couldn't do that under twelve hours. After the worst of this flood has gone by the river'll drop back again into its regular bed."

"But where will we be by that time, Andy?"

"Still hanging to this bully old raft, I reckon, and looking for a landing-place, mebbe!" came the confident answer. "I'm proud of one thing, Specs, and that is the splendid way my ship held thru all that juggling. Say, it was enough to test any kind of boat, and yet not a timber did she lose. I certainly builded better than I knew when I drove home those railroad spikes and fastened these ropes around my dandy raft."

In this fashion then did Andy continue to talk on, his main object doubtless being to raise the drooping spirits of his weaker companion. Miles and miles they had left behind them since starting on this mad race with the flood that had been released with the breaking of the treacherous wall of masonry up at the paper mills.

They had neither of them been able to catch even a single glimpse of the shore for some time now. Perhaps Andy suspected the truth, but if so he did not hasten to inform his chum. But by degrees Specs himself was noticing a change.

"Andy, don't you think the current isn't quite so swift as it was before?" he suddenly asked, as tho he had been engaged in figuring it out.

"Yes, that's a fact, Specs," came the answer.

Just at that moment the first flash of lightning shot athwart the black heavens, and Specs was appalled at what he saw.

"Why, Andy, the shore seemed a whole mile away just then; and say, on both sides of us there was an awful big stretch of water. What does it mean, Andy? Oh! Do you think it's possible that we've already been swept clear of the little Maurice River; and Andy, are we right now out on the big Mississippi?"

"Just what's happened to us, Specs," he was told, without any attempt at concealment, "and now that the current is fairly decent, I'm meaning to strip again so as to try and tow the raft in

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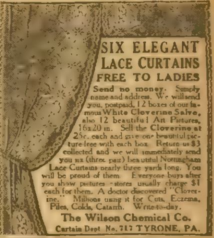

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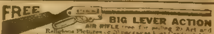

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the direction of the shore. Wish me success, Specs!"

CHAPTER IV

IN THE GRIP OF THE STORM.

IT WAS anything but a laughing matter to those two boys; and even valiant Andy understood this fact, tho he tried to make light of it in order to buoy up the more timid heart of the Company end of the firm.

To find themselves suddenly transported by the swift water route many miles away from home, and upon the flood-raging Mississippi, with only a miserable little raft to serve as their support, was a serious proposition. How they were going to solve the puzzling question of getting to the shore and then back home again was more than Specs Whittaker could see for the life of him.

Fortunately, however, Andy was one of those fellows who believe in taking matters as they come, and making the best of them. Plainly, the first thing to be done was to try to edge along in closer to the far distant shore, so that eventually they could make a landing. What was to come after that took place—well, when they reached that bridge they would cross it, and until the time came what was the use of worrying?

"What if we just can't get ashore, Andy?" ventured Specs, while his companion was again taking off those wet clothes of his preparatory to dropping overboard once more, so as to urge the raft shoreward.

"I don't allow myself to believe we can't do that, Specs," the other told him, severely; "and even if morning should find us still floating down the big river, why, don't you know, steamboats and all sorts of craft ply these same waters regularly. We'll put up a distress signal, and then some passing packet is going to send out a boat to get us aboard. Now I'm ready, and I'll start the old schooner moving toward the eastern shore."

"Is that any closer than the other, Andy?"

"I'm not so sure about that," came the reply from the energetic boy who was already in the water, and commencing to swim lustily, at the same time pushing with all his might against the raft; "but then you see home lies on that bank, Specs."

"Oh, yes! Home, sweet home!" muttered the other, almost pathetically, so that Andy was forced to call out:

"Let me tell you we'll have a great yarn to spin to the other fellows when we do get home, Specs, whether that is tomorrow or next week. There never were two Guilford boys who went thru such a thrilling experience before. Why, don't you know, you'll be one of the heroes of the old town after this, Specs?"

"But I never hankered after such a distinction," expostulated Specs. "It isn't as if I'd been always yearning for things to happen to me, like you have, Andy. For me it was enough to know I had a good home, plenty of decent food to eat, a school to go to, with a comfortable bed at home, and a chair by the fire when I took a dandy book out of the library. I've done all my traveling by reading."

"All right, then, Specs, you'll enjoy your books of travel a heap sight better after this little experience. You'll be able to feel for those who run up against all sorts of trouble and difficulty. Perhaps—who knows?—you'll appreciate how good that soup tasted to Doctor Franklin and his castaways up in the polar regions, when they had to use their fur-lined boots to make it out of."

"Oh! Andy, you're only joshing me now, I'm sure. You certainly don't believe we'll ever come to such a pass as that?" cried poor Specs, possibly quivering with a new dread, that of starving.

"Not much danger, old fellow. But don't you think you can feel the raft edging a little in the direction of the shore now, Specs?"

Specs said he fancied he could detect some sort of motion; and this was within the bounds of reason, too, because Andy was working like a steam engine with hands and feet, and constantly bumping up against the float on the side opposite to the direction whence he wished it to go. Perhaps he did influence the raft to a small extent; but the current had them in its grip, and whatever it willed, the floating object had to simply obey.

Some time passed in this way. Specs began to grow solicitous concerning his energetic chum, the head of the corporation.

"Don't you think you've done enough for now, Andy?" he went on to say. "That water is cold, I know, and you might be taken with a cramp. Suppose that happened, and all at once I missed you! Oh! It would frighten me half to death to find you gone! Better climb aboard again, Andy, and I'll help you get your clothes on. Really I don't see how you manage to stand it, when I'm shivering right now

"Then slap your arms like everything, Specs," admonished the other. "Nothing like exercise to get the blood bounding thru your veins, and start your heart to pumping like a steam engine. That's how I manage to keep fairly decent. If I just hung here in this cold water I'd soon get chilled thru to the bone. This adventure is going to be the making of you, Specs, I reckon."

"Do you really think so, Andy?" chattered the other, as he commenced to do as he had been directed, slapping both arms back and forth with all his might.

"Sure I do," continued the boy in the water, encouragingly. "You'll get a new grip on yourself, and have a heap more confidence after this. It's been in you all along, but the opportunity never came up to bring it out. But I guess I will quit this swimming racket for a while, because I'm getting tired; and to tell you the truth, I believe it isn't doing very much good."

He climbed up on the raft again, and after a short time commenced to try to get into his clothes. This was no easy task, since they were pretty well soaked; and besides, Andy commenced to shiver himself, so that he felt compelled to stop three separate times in order to thrash his arms about, and thus invigorate the sluggish circulation of blood thru his veins.

All this while the lightning had increased in frequency and brilliancy as well. They heard the booming of thunder in the distance, growing constantly nearer. It was really the first thunderstorm of the season, and this fact made it seem all the more singular. Had it come after a hot summer day, Andy would not have thought it so strange; but at this early time in the spring it appeared out of place.

Then the rain began to descend, and the wind blew along with it. The boys had no shelter, and were soon wet again thru and thru. Specs believed he was ten times more miserable than he had ever before found himself, looking back as far in the past as he could. Scrapes that at the time they occurred might have seemed serious enough to give him more or less concern now took on the guise of mere trifles. Why, even the time some mischievous companions had shoved him into that old vault in the burying ground, and fastened the door on the outside, leaving him there with the night coming on—while he might have suffered greatly from imagination during the hour he remained there, calling frantically at the top of his voice, until finally he was rescued—still Specs told himself that he would gladly agree to spend an entire night in such confinement in preference to facing what now lay before him.

To tell the bare truth, it was anything but a pleasant experience, even for Andy; and to a much more delicate fellow like Specs Whittaker the situation must have been filled with awe-inspiring possibilities.

Perhaps they were not in any serious danger of being washed off the flat surface of the raft at any time, but the clumsy structure kicked up quite threateningly as the wind and the waves buffeted it back and forth. The storm raged wildly out there on the bosom of the swollen river. Having such a long distance to sweep over the surface of the water, after leaving the western shore, the wind created quite a savage sea, and the raft bobbed up and down like a cork.

Specs suffered in silence. He shut his teeth hard together, and was resolved not to complain, for how was Andy to help matters? Besides, he feared the other might determine to go overboard again, and once more urge the float shoreward; and this Specs did not wish him to do. While he did not say as much to his companion, secretly he feared lest there might be some mysterious marine monster in that big sheet of water, one that was likely to seize upon any swimmer. Perhaps some of those monster alligators which he knew had their homes away down in the lower reaches of the Mississippi might have ventured far North in search of food, and would only too eagerly seize upon such a fine morsel as plump Andy.

"There's one good thing about this storm, anyway," ventured Andy, during a brief lull in the raging of the elements, of which both of them took advantage to continue their former athletic exercises with all the vim they could command, for it was absolutely necessary that they do this in order to keep their teeth from rattling together like Spanish castanets in the fingers of a dancer.

"What might that be?" asked Specs, at the same time wondering if Andy could not discover some ameliorating circumstance in the worst disaster that ever happened.

"Well, you see it keeps blowing mostly out of the west, and of course that's going to push us gradually over toward the eastern shore. Right now, Specs, I reckon we're moving a heap faster than I could manage to push, even when I worked with all my horse power."

"That sounds mighty good, Andy," asserted the other, "and there may be some truth in the idea; but whenever the lightning flashes, and I look away off yonder toward the home-land, oh, how far it does seem! I should say this river was miles wide, and that we are still pretty far out and near the middle of the channel."

"Well, the old Mississippi is a pretty hefty stream any time," admitted Andy; "and just now is the season of the spring floods, so it's on the boom. Wow! Here comes another siege of that howling wind, and the water is boiling again. Keep a firm grip, Specs," and while speaking in this fashion, Andy edged a trifle closer to his companion, really so as to be ready to throw out a protecting arm in case any calamity threatened.

It was when the next brilliant flash came that Andy uttered a cry.

"What was it?" demanded Specs, who apparently had heard the shout so close to his ears, and immediately suspected that some fresh peril must be menacing them.

"Something I just glimpsed ahead of us that looked like land!" shrilled the other boy, excitedly.

At that Specs became so aroused that Andy just had to make use of that ready arm, or the other might have been knocked from the raft when the next wave pitched them violently along.

It seemed as tho Nature must be tantalizing them, that next flash was so exceedingly long in coming; but then Specs knew how a "watched pot never boils," and he persisted, even tho the minutes were passing. When finally there was another brief session of dim illumination he strained his eyes to see, and almost immediately shrieked:

"I saw it too, Andy; yes, I did, and it was land! Oh, to be sure it was! There were trees waving in the wind, and rocks in the bargain. Listen, right now, and you can hear the water beating against the shore. Oh, we've got there, after all, thank goodness! But we mustn't let the raft swing out again, Andy, even if both of us have to go overboard and push like everything."

"Hold hard again, for here comes another whirl of wind and the waves!" suddenly called Andy, at which Specs once more flattened himself face downward on the float, gripping the seat he had occupied when rowing with a grim determination to hold out to the bitter end.

They could feel the raft being tossed this way and that by the surging waves; and then came an extra fierce convulsion, immediately followed by a crash that almost stunned the two boys; but Andy knew that they had been actually tossed ashore!

This interesting story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

Many More in Illinois Are Willing to Testify

Mrs. S. J. Brown, of 2nd and Ford Sts., Geneva, Ill., says: "I had taken care of a person ill with consumption, and had contracted a cough and was in a badly run-down condition. I had a doctor but the treatment seemed to be too slow, or to do little good. Then I began using Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery and it eased my cough and I began to build up. After using the third bottle I had my usual strength back and have had no cough since. I give the credit of my recovery to the 'Discovery.'"

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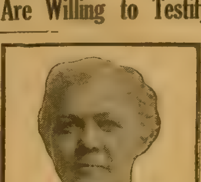
Mrs. L. W. Miller, residing at 308 Pecan St., Carbondale, Ill., says: "I consider Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription a great boon to womankind for weakness, also for inflammation for which I have been greatly benefited."

Mrs. A. E. Green, 833 S. Sixth St., Quincy, Ill., says: "Some years ago I moved to Colorado and the climate did not agree with me. I got all run-down, could not eat nor sleep. I became very thin and weak; my blood was also in a very bad condition. I sent to the druggist for some medicine and he sent me Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery and it soon restored me to health and strength. I cannot say enough in praise of this medicine." —Advertisement.



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Chicago Ledger

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READERS WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS

Economy supplies old age with an easy chair.

He who calls all men fools is right in one instance.

Giving advice is like kissing—easy and pleasant.

Lucky people are those who do not depend upon luck.

It is easy to be popular if you don't care what you say.

Optimism consists in asking for cream at a boarding-house.

Don't gouge other people while carving out your fortune.

Doubtless the original board of education was the blackboard.

An umbrella does a lot of good, but it has to be put up to it.

Tho the sun shines for all, the moon is reserved for spoony couples.

Some men are like silver-plated knives—they look bright but are often dull.

This is said to be a woman's age, yet women have little to say about their age.

The optimist expects a good deal even if it is the other fellow's turn to shuffle.

Sprinkle a little salt of economy on the tail of riches and they will not fly away.

Never court a girl whose father is a pessimist, for he always has a kick coming.

When it comes to coddling imaginary wrongs the average man is a faithful nurse.

As long as you refrain from saying anything you keep the other fellow guessing.

Tho you may be satisfied to carry a rabbit's foot, your wife will require a set of furs.

A thrifty housewife says there isn't much venison in market, but there is plenty of dear meat.

Sneer not at the imperfections of others. It is doubly cruel to beat a cripple with his own crutch.

It is just as easy to look pleasant as it is to wear a long face and look as if you had dined on crabapples.

If you would put a small boy where you may hope to find him five minutes later put him in the pantry.

A laborer makes a bargain for the price of his work, but a lawyer sizes up your pile and charges accordingly.

When an author's books are popular enough for paper covers he can afford to cover himself with broadcloth.

It's easy for a millionaire philosopher to tell a young man how to live on $6 a week and put money in the bank.

Men wouldn't care how much their wives talked if they would use nothing but the sign language. Then they could shut their eyes and sleep in peace.

Home and Health

FASHION NOTES.

Boleroing seems to be one of the popular pastimes of this coming spring, for the short, jaunty little bolers jacket appears in suits, lingerie frocks, and all manner of one-piece costumes.

"The rage for khaki-kool does not seem to have 'kooled' in the least," notes the haggard person who attends Madam Fashion. Every day we have some new and more excited design plunging headlong into our sports clothes and linings and hats and bags.

It's a long sweater line that has no turning. Only a little while ago they were putting everything on a sweater that they could rally from the depths of the old hair drawer and the top of the closet shelves. Now, however, the wise ones are trying the profits of subtraction, and the sleeveless sweater promises to be one of the spring's cherished boons.

Suits are going to have a checkered career this spring, but the checks are coming in the makeup, not in the favor with which they are bound to be received. To be sure, we are pretty apt to have a blossoming forth of checks along with the flowers in the spring, but the shepherd's check has generally been the expected visitor. This spring the colored checks are receiving more of a welcome. The size does not appear to make much difference. There are very fine checks known as pinheads, and checks that would put any checkerboard into miniature, and one is apparently almost as well liked as the other.

❧

FOR THE HOUSEWIFE.

A piece of bed ticking about a yard square, preferably old, will save your kitchen towels and many a burnt hand.

Preserved skinless figs are delicious and may be bought in jars or cans. Many like them for breakfast with hot buttered rolls or with a natural syrup drained off and cream substituted.

Scratch your finger nails over a piece of soap before working in the garden or doing any other kind of rough work, so that when you wash your hands the soap will come out easily, leaving your hands nice and clean.

If you have a suspicion that the gas pipes are leaking, a sure test can be made by applying a paste of soap and water to the joints, if there is a crack or break bubbles will appear in a little while. This is a safe attempt to locate a leak. Neither matches nor candles ever should be used.

For an excellent furniture polish mix together half a quart each of turpentine, paraffin, vinegar and methylated spirit in a pint bottle. When in use shake well and sprinkle a little on a soft rag and well rub on the furniture. Polish with a soft duster.

When a bedroom or small dressing-room is papered with anything but a plain or neutral paper, bright-colored or flowered chintz should never be used, but often a little color is needed to add tone to the room. In a case of this kind, one of the new bedspreads which are so pretty and easily made is just the thing to give the necessary color.

❧

HEALTH NOTES.

A raw potato is a good remedy for burns. Scrape or grate the potato and apply it like a poultice to the injured surface.

When traveling one should always bear in mind that cinders are apt to find their way into the eyes. An eye cup, a lotion for bathing and a few flaxseed should be included in your grip.

Wash for weak, tired or inflamed eyes: Fifteen drops of spirits of camphor, one teaspoonful of boric acid, two-thirds of a cup of boiling water. Cool and strain thru muslin. Use twice a day with an eye dropper or apply with absorbent cotton.

Treatment for bony neck: Massage every night with a cream made of two ounces of lanolin and one-half ounce of cocoa butter. Every morning dash on cold water, using a big sponge for the purpose. Just before retiring take a glassful of hot milk. Learn to breathe deeply, go in for vocal culture and drink plenty of water. Practice resistance exercises, with the weight at the back of the head.

❧

NEEDLEWORK NOTES.

To keep an ever-restless youngster quiet and from crawling away all the time, get a large, soft, gray blanket and cut out gay designs from the nursery books and sew on the blanket, the pictures to be of linen cut from children's linen books sold in all the shops. The bright pictures attract the child's attention and he will sit for hours looking and picking at them. A baby fence around it completes the outfit.

Cashmere lends itself admirably to the fashioning of baby's articles on account of being soft, fine and warm. A carriage cover was made of the cashmere lined with the pink china silk. The edges were bound with pink ribbon and squares were marked off diagonally on the cashmere by means of featherstitching; a tiny flower was worked in each square. The colors were alternated, a pink and a blue one with yellow French knots for the center. A carriage strap made in the same way should be used with this robe.

❧

RECIPES.

CREAMED OYSTERS.—Cook one pint of oysters in two tablespoonfuls of melted butter one minute. Remove the oysters and add two tablespoonfuls of flour, a cup of cream, seasoning of salt, pepper and a pinch of mace, two beaten eggs and a cup of chopped stewed celery. Put back the oysters, heat and serve on halves of pastry crackers. Patties may be made, if preferred, or the oysters served in bread shells, dried in the oven.

APPLE SAUCE OMELET.—Beat the yolks of seven eggs light, stir into them five tablespoons of powdered sugar and one and one-half cupfuls of sweetened apple sauce; beat long and hard; stir in the stiffened egg whites, beat for a minute longer and turn into a greased pudding dish. Bake, covered, for about ten minutes, then uncover and brown. Serve at once with whipped cream.

CHEESE RELISH.—Cut one-quarter pound of cheese into slices; put into a frying pan, pour over it one large cup of milk into which has been mixed one-half teaspoonful of dry mustard and a pinch of salt; add a piece of butter size of a walnut; stir all the time; have ready some cracker crumbs; sprinkle them into the above mixture; when thoroly mixed turn into a warm dish and serve. Nice for luncheon.

❧

DO YOU CROCHET?

Is the tip of the second finger of your left hand cut and aching from the sharp point of your steel crochet needle. Is there a callous spot on the second finger of your right hand?

The crochet needle may be small, but when it goes astray, and the point plunges into the tip of one's finger, judging by the pain, it seems like a sword thrust.

A strip of adhesive tape placed around each finger-tip will protect them without interfering with the work. Fingers from kid gloves are nice, but if they extend beyond the first joint of the finger they are clumsy to work with.

❧

DOWER CHESTS.

Nowadays the bride-to-be realizes the necessity of a dignified receptacle in which to lay her dowry of linen and lingerie. Of late she has turned somewhat to the conveniences of a wardrobe with half its interior fitted with drawers, but on the whole she leans to the custom of her grandmothers and great-great-grandmothers for centuries back and selects a chest which, according to its design, may afterward be converted to storeroom uses or put into the hall or bedroom, or even as a useful as well as an ornamental piece of furniture.

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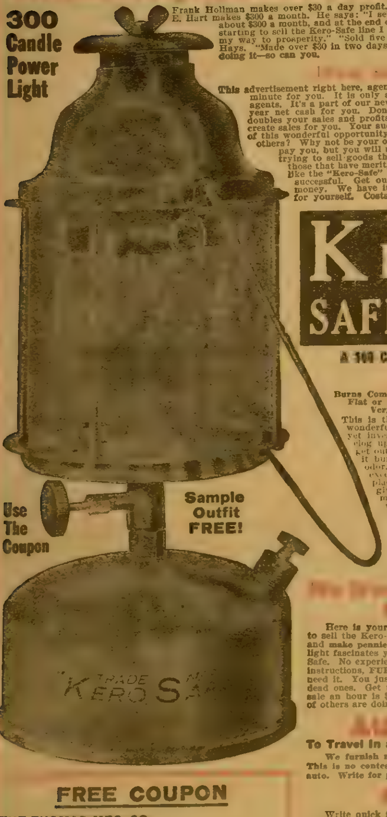

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Frank Hollman makes over $30 a day profit. W. H. Tice made $45 in 5 hours—averages over $25 a day. R. E. Hart makes $300 a month. He says: "I sell from 5 to 12 Kero-Safes every day. My profits amount to about $300 a month, and at the end of the year will amount to three or four thousand dollars. Since starting to sell the Kero-Safe line I have secured the five passenger automobile and am now beating my way to prosperity." "Sold five lanterns last night," Guy Shull. "Sold 12 first night," R. H. Hays. "Made over $30 in two days," P. F. King, etc., etc. Send for sworn proof. Hundreds are doing it—so can you.

[illegible]

This advertisement right here, agents, is being read in half a million homes—making sales every minute for you. It is only a small part of our big campaign to create customers for our agents. It's a part of our new selling plan that will make easy sailing and $3,000 to $5,000 a year net cash for you. Don't delay another minute, but investigate our new plan—that doubles your sales and profits. We furnish free sample and back it up with advertising to create sales for you. Your success is our success. Drop everything right now and take hold of this wonderful opportunity while it is yours. We will show you the way. Why toil for others? Why not be your own boss? You make money for your employer or he would not pay you, but you will make more when working for yourself. You can't make money trying to sell goods that everyone has. Try new things as they present themselves, those that have merit, and for which there is an enormous demand and a large profit like the "Kero-Safe" Lamp, then you have nothing to risk and you are certain to be successful. Get out of the "piker" class. Be a regular salesman making big money. We have it for you. Send us the coupon below—that's all we ask. See for yourself. Costs you nothing.

KERO-SAFE SAFETY LANTERN

A 300 CANDLE POWER LIGHT FOR ONE-HALF CENT AN HOUR

[illegible]

Burns Common Kerosene, Absolutely safe. Will Burn Even When Lying Flat or Turned Upside Down. No Danger of Fire by Overturning. Very Economical. Makes Wonderfully Brilliant Light.

This is the famous widely advertised "Kero-Safe" lantern. The most wonderful invention of modern times. The nearest thing to sunshine yet invented. Safer than electricity. No danger. Easy to fill. Can't clog up. Automatically cleans itself (late improvement). Nothing to get out of order. Gives a strong, brilliant 300 candle power light. As it burns common kerosene the cost is very trifling. No smoke, no odor, no grease. Can be used for house light. Nothing to wear out, except mantles and they are lasting and durable and easily replaced. It is handsomely built, fully nickel plated. Guaranteed to give utmost satisfaction. Farmers, ranchers, railroad men, dairymen, garagemen, autoists, hucksters, every man needs it. Here's what users say about it: "It's a wonder,"—Emil Perrenoid (Farmer). "Artificial light has reached perfection in the Kero-Safe." Geo. M. Lawson (Dairyman) "The Kero-Safe is altogether satisfactory and I want to get several more."—R. J. LaRose (Hotel Man). "It's giving more light than half a dozen oil lights." G. W. Murray (Autoist). "It's the best light I have ever seen." John C. Beck (Stock Raiser). "I would not take $25.00 for my Kero-Safe."—R. S. Rulett (Huckster) "It works fine. Can't be excelled.'—John B. Vary (Fruit Grower).

[illegible]

Here is your opportunity to make big money, make it fast. It's as easy to sell the Kero-Safe Lantern and make Dollars, as it is to sell small articles and make pennies. Just simply light the lantern, it sells itself. The brilliant light fascinates your customers—they can't resist. Anybody can sell the Kero-Safe. No experience needed. We show you how—furnish everything, send full instructions, FURNISH OUTFIT FREE, give you credit on your orders if you need it. You just demonstrate and pocket your profit. Quit wasting time on dead ones. Get this big, new quick seller. Make really big money—only one sale an hour is $2.58 profit an hour—$25.80 a day. You can do it. Hundreds of others are doing it. We show sworn proof.

AUTOMOBILE FREE

To Travel In and Introduce KERO-SAFE Lamps and Lanterns

We furnish representatives with a five passenger automobile to travel in. This is no contest where only one person wins. ANYBODY can get this free auto. Write for particulars.

FREE TRIAL OFFER

Write quick for sample lantern on our free trial offer plan. Light it—try it—see for yourself how wonderful it is. Then try it out as a seller. See if what we say is true. You don't risk a penny. If you do not think this is the most wonderful lantern and the most wonderful seller you have ever seen, send back your sample. It won't cost you a cent. Mail coupon to-day—right now.

THOMAS MFG. CO.

317 Thomas Building, DAYTON, OHIO

FREE COUPON

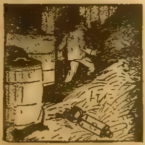
THE THOMAS MFG. CO.
317 Thomas Building, Dayton, Ohio

Please send me terms of Free Sample Kero-Safe Lamp and Lantern and how to get a Free Automobile for canvassing.

Name ....

Address ....

City .... State ....



Can't set fire to anything not even if it falls in hay.

Makes the darkest road as light as brightest moonlight.

Makes the best reading lamp you can buy at any price.

Highly valued by railroad men because of its powerful light.

Can't be beaten for camping out, hunting or fishing trips.

Farmers will never be without a Kero-Safe lantern, once tried.

Classified Want Ads

The rate for one insertion in Chicago Ledger and one insertion in The Saturday Blade is 30 cents a word, minimum 14 words, less 3% for cash. Each initial and group of figures is counted as a word, and the name and address are also counted. This is the minimum rate; neither more nor less is charged, irrespective of size of ad or number of insertions. An ad may appear in both publications of the same week, or in the Blade of one week and the Ledger of the next.

SALESMEN WANTED

SALESMEN WANTED AT ONCE TO SELL our guaranteed 21 jewel watches direct to wearer on easy installment payments of only $2.50 monthly; selling price extremely reasonable. We pay straight salary $100 month, all expenses and big extra commissions; year's contract; can use several men in different sections. Address, Pope Watch Co., Longview, Texas.

AGENTS WANTED

STOP HERE—JUST OUT—EISEN REGULATOR for Ford Headlights. Selling like wildfire everywhere. Gives splendid driving light at low speed—keeps bulbs from burning out—works entirely automatically. Needed on every Ford. Big profits quick. Listen: Hopkins, Tenn., cleared $16.20 first day. McFarland, Nebr., made $3492.00 in 17 weeks. Siler, Okla., sells 12 a day—profit $20.00. No experience or capital needed. We show you how. Sales guaranteed. Hurry, don't delay, write now for special information how you can make money. Address Eisen Instrument Co., 614 Valentine Bldg., Toledo, Ohio.

AGENTS, I WANT 100 MEN TO ACT AS MY agents and take orders for "Kantleak" Raincoats. I paid Eli Bridge $88.95 for one week's spare time. Cooper $314 last month. Wonderful values. A dandy coat for $3.98. No money required. No delivering or collecting. Sample coat and complete outfit all free. Big season just starting. There's a thousand dollars in this for you if you grab quick. Write now. Comer Mfg. Co., 10 Card St., Dayton, Ohio.

AGENTS: BIG HIT. OUR 5 PIECE ALUMINUM Set is all the rage. Cheaper than enamel ware. Sells like wildfire. Guaranteed 20 years. Retail value $5.00. You sell to housewives for only $1.83. Biggest seller of the age. 9 sure sales out of every 10 shown. Others cleaning up $10.00 to $20.00 a day. Answer this quick to secure your territory. Div. NN 5, American Aluminum Mfg. Co., Lemont, Ill.

BIG TEXTILE MILLS WANT AMBITIOUS men and women everywhere to show latest dress fabrics, neckwear, hosiery, underwear, and sweaters. 400 styles. Easy sales. Values beat stores. Many making over $30 weekly. All or spare time. Complete sample outfit starts you. Steadfast Mills, 18 Rem[illegible] St., Cohoes, N. Y.

WOULD $150 MONTHLY, AUTO OF YOUR own to travel in, as general agent, handling remarkable sellers, Lightning Patch Vulcanizer, Shock Absorber, and Anti-Thief Combination Auto-Switch Lock, thief proof, interest you? Then address Dept. L-1, U. S. Manufacturing Co., Wolcott, Indiana.

WE START YOU IN BUSINESS, FURNISHING everything; men and women, $30.00 to $200.00 weekly operating our "New System Specialty Candy Factories," home anywhere. Opportunity lifetime; booklet free. Z. Ragsdale Co., East Orange, N. J.

NEWEST MONEYMAKER: 11 PIECE TOILET set selling like blazes at $1.00, with $1 carving set free! Enormous profits! Tremendous hit! Randall sold 30 one day. Success sure. M. Pierce Co., 906 W. Lake, Chicago.

AGENTS! SELL WELLER'S TOILET PREPARATIONS. Get into business for yourself. 25c brings you ½ oz. sample jar of Weller's greaseless cucumber and facial creams. Particulars free. Write Weller's Toilet Preparations, 735 E. 43d St., Chicago.

233% PROFIT SELLING JUBILEE Spark Intensifiers to automobile owners, garages. Sure cure for spark plug troubles. Sells like wild fire. Brand new. Exclusive territory. Write today. Jubilee Mfg. Co., Dept. 140-B, Omaha, Neb.

AGENTS—SELL RICH-LOOKING IMPORTED 36x68 rugs. $1 each. Carter, Tenn., sold 116 in 4 days. Profit $57. You can do same. Write for sample offer selling plan; exclusive territory. Sample rug by parcel post prepaid, 98c. E. Condon, Importer, Boston, Mass.

AGENTS—100% PROFIT. THREE-IN-ONE Shoe Brush. Polish, dauber and shiner—all in one. Costs only 1-6 of cent a shine. Write quick for territory and free pocket sample. Fountain Shoe Brush Co., 1411 North St., Dayton, Ohio.

MINTON'S IRON, RUST, MILDUE AND INK Remover, vanishes stains like magic. Retail 25c, profit 17c; 10c brings working outfit. Minton Chemical Co., 702 Dallas Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa.

AGENTS—GET PARTICULARS OF ONE OF the best paying propositions ever put on the market; something no one else sells; make $4000 yearly. Address E. M. Feltman, Sales Manager, 9754 3rd St., Cincinnati, O.

ENORMOUS PROFITS DEMONSTRATING wonderful new machine. Produces butter at 4 cents pound. Retails $1.50. Demand enormous. Sample free. Ovee Manufacturing Company, Dept. 3, Louisville, Kentucky.

AGENTS—$30 A WEEK AND EXPENSES selling window gold sign letters. Anyone can put on. Free samples. Liberal offer to general agents. Metallic Letter Co., 416 N. Clark, Chicago.

SUIT $3.75, PANTS $1.00, MADE TO measure. For even a better offer than this write and ask for free samples and styles. Knickerbocker Tailoring Co., Dept. 614, Chicago, Ill.

WANTED—HONEST MEN AND WOMEN to distribute circulars, samples, etc. $40.00 weekly. Send for application at once. Out-Door Advertising Co., Dept. 13, New Bedford, Mass.

AGENTS — STEADY INCOME ASSURED selling ladies' silk waists. Liberal terms; guaranteed goods. System Manufacturing Co., 60, Altoona, Pa.

SELL GLOSSINE HAIR STRAIGHTENER to colored people; great seller, enormous profits. American Supply House, 19 Pike, Covington, Ky.

RAINCOAT AGENTS. WRITE FOR THE honest, live, proposition. Biggest commissions. Free outfit. Consolidated Raincoat Co., Clerk 10, Boston, Mass.

SOMETHING NEW IN PORTRAITS AND frames. Agents wanted; write for catalogue, big inducements to new customers. Southern Art Co., Oak Park, Ill.

$100.00 EARNED MONTHLY, LEAVING "Easywash" with grocers everywhere. Mr. Rienzi, Cutler St., Newark, N. J.

REMNANT STORE, CINCINNATI, OHIO. Greatest dry goods bargains on earth. Agents and store keepers supplied.

AGENTS WANTED—(Continued)

PORTRAIT AGENTS SEND FOR OUR large catalog. 16x20 frames 14c up. Portraits at 35c. Samples free. Credit given. Address Friedman Mfg. Co., Box 120, Martinsburg, Mo.

AGENTS—I'VE A NEW SOAP GAME that's a dandy. New stuff; 100% profits. Sample and full layout free. Write quick. Lacassian Co., Dept. 21, St. Louis, Mo.

WE PAY $80 MONTHLY SALARY AND furnish rig and expenses to introduce guaranteed poultry and stock powders. Bigler Company, X 520, Springfield, Ill.

WE PAY $36 A WEEK AND EXPENSES TO men with rigs to introduce poultry compound. Year's contract. Imperial Mfg. Co., Dept. 67, Parsons, Kans.

AGENTS—SELL RELIABLE CUSTOM MADE Raincoats and Gabardines, big commission. Complete sample line free. Temple Raincoat Company, Templeton, Mass.

HUSTLING MAN AGENT. BIG TAILORING society. Emblem button free. Box 836-B, Chicago.

HELP WANTED

MEN—BECOME GOVERNMENT RAILWAY mail clerks. $75 to $150 month. Every second week off with pay. Education unnecessary. Sample examination questions free. Write immediately. Franklin Institute, Dep't A 30, Rochester, N. Y.

$40 WEEKLY REPORTING NAMES, INFORMATION. All or spare time. Men, women. Capital unnecessary. No canvassing. Be our representative. National Information Exchange, 205 Bromley Bldg., Omaha, Neb.

MAN OR WOMAN TO TRAVEL FOR OLD-established firm. No canvassing; $1,170 first year, payable weekly, pursuant to contract; expenses advanced. G. K. Nichols, Phila., Pa., Pepper Bldg.

EVERY READER OF THE LEDGER OUGHT to read these ads. Every week splendid chances to make money—to better yourself—to buy, sell or exchange goods or services, are offered here.

BECOME CHAUFFEURS, $25 WEEK. Learn while earning. Sample lessons free. Franklin Institute, Dept. A 810, Rochester, N. Y.

$35 WEEKLY COLLECTING NAMES AND addresses. Send stamp. Ursus Company, Dept. A2, Chicago, Ill.

$25 WEEKLY COLLECTING NAMES AND addresses. Send stamp. Superba Co., W52, Baltimore, Md.

MAKE $100 WEEKLY BY MAIL. STAMP brings guaranteed plan. Weller Company, Binghamton, New York.

WE PAY 25c EACH FOR FARMERS' names. Send dime for contract. Sun, Leroy, Mich.

MALE HELP WANTED

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES WANTED — Big pay, sure work. I will prepare you in a short time at small cost. Must be American citizen. Write for my free book FC 1034 today. Earl Hopkins, Washington, D. C.

NO STRIKE: 8 HOUR DAY. MEN EVERYWHERE. Firemen, brakemen, baggagemen, $120. Colored porters. Experience unnecessary. 686 Railway Bureau, E. St. Louis, Ill.

RAILWAY MAIL CLERKS WANTED, $75.00 month. Sample examination questions free. Franklin Institute, Dep't A 28, Rochester, N. Y.

GOVERNMENT EXAMINATIONS — THOROUGH instruction, $5. Returned if not appointed. Particulars free. American Civil Service School, Washington, D. C.

BE A DETECTIVE, $50-$100 WEEKLY; travel over world. Experience unnecessary. European American Detective Institute, 400 Syndicate, St. Louis.

BE AN AUTOMOBILE EXPERT IN SIX weeks. Our big book tells you how. Rahe's Automobile School, 1053 Locust St., Kansas City, Mo.

BE A DETECTIVE. EARN FROM $150.00 to $300.00 per month; travel over the world. Write C. T. Ludwig, 320 Westover Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

FIREMEN, BRAKEMEN, BEGINNERS $125, railroads everywhere. Railway Association, Brooklyn, N. Y.

STOP SLAVING, SILVER MIRRORS, PLATE tableware, home. Sure income. Clarence Sprinkle, Dept. 2, Marion, Ind.

FEMALE HELP WANTED

LADIES WANTED AND MEN, TOO, TO ADDRESS envelopes and mail advertising matter at home for large mail order firms, spare or whole time. Can make $10 to $35 weekly. No capital or experience required. Book, explaining everything, mailed for 10c to cover postage, etc. Ward Publishing House, Sanbornton, N. H.

GIVEN TO ANY WOMAN. BEAUTIFUL 100 piece gold dec. dinner set for distributing (not selling) only 5 doz. pkgs. Diamond Dust Soap Powder free among friends. No money or experience needed. New Method Mfg. Co., 306 W. Superior St., Chicago.

WILL PAY RELIABLE WOMAN $25.00 TO distribute Free (not to sell) 200 pkgs. Borax Soap Powder among friends. No money required. B. W. Ward Company, 732 N. Franklin St., Chicago.

FIVE BRIGHT, CAPABLE LADIES TO travel, demonstrate and sell dealers. $25 to $50 per week. Railroad fare paid. Goodrich Drug Company, Dept. 85, Omaha, Neb.

WOMEN—START DRESSMAKING BUSINESS at home. $25 week. Write for free sample lessons. Franklin Institute, Dept. A 854, Rochester, N. Y.

BOYS AND GIRLS

GUARANTEED WATCH OR GOLD PLATED bracelet free to boys and girls for placing sample packet seeds with friends. Eckert Seed Co., B-24, Cly, Pa.

MOTORCYCLES

MOTORCYCLES—HIGH GRADE NEW OR used Motorcycle, $25 cash. Send 2c stamp for bulletin "K"; lowest prices, easiest terms. Peerless Motocycle Co., Boston, Mass.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

FREE FOR ONE MONTH—OUR WEEKLY magazine, "Inside Investments," is devoted to a financial idea worthy of consideration. A real "inside investment" should easily double in value every three months. Figure for yourself what $100 would amount to in a few years if invested and re-invested on that basis. Our magazine points the way to making such investments. $2.00 per year. Send today for one month's free subscription. Address McIntyre Companies, Limited, 1699 Westminster Bldg., Chicago.

FREE FOR SIX MONTHS—MY SPECIAL offer to introduce my magazine, "Investing for Profit." It is worth $10 a copy to any one who has not acquired sufficient money to provide necessities and comforts for self and loved ones. It shows how to become richer quickly and honestly. Investing for Profit is the only progressive financial journal and has the largest circulation in America. It shows how $100 grows to $2,200; write now and I'll send it six months free. H. L. Barber, 453, 28 W. Jackson Boulevard, Chicago.

MILLIONS OF DOLLARS STILL BEING made in Sour Lake Oil Fields, Sour Lake, Texas. $1 down, $1 monthly nine months may make you $10,000. Cooperative well. Full information, complete maps free. Write today. Sour Lake-Texas Oil Co., General Offices 2823 Ann, St. Louis, Mo.

DON'T INVEST IN OIL UNTIL YOU HAVE read "Texas Investor"; gives facts and information about rich Texas oil fields; tells how to invest small sums for biggest profits and quick action. Send name for 3 months free. C. C. Cannan, Editor, 657 Chronicle Blg., Houston, Texas.

$20 BUYS DEED TO LAND, ALSO INTEREST in oil well that should pay you $100 for every dollar invested; payments $2 monthly; complete information free. Address Texas-Gulf Co., 1105 Union Bank, Houston, Texas.

INVEST IN GOLD AND SILVER MINES, showing promise of raising another crop of millionaires. Address Midwest Investment Bureau, 683 Boston Block, Minneapolis, Minn.

PATENTS

PATENTS SECURED OR FEE RETURNED. Actual search and patentability report free. Send sketches and description, or model, of your invention. My patent sales service gets full value. 1917 edition ninety-page patent book free. George P. Kimmel, 260 Barrister Building, Washington, D. C.

WANTED, AN IDEA! WHO CAN THINK of some simple thing to patent? Protect your ideas, they may bring you wealth. Write for "Needed Inventions," "Patent Buyers," and "How to Get Your Patent and Your Money." Randolph & Co., Patent Attorneys, Dept. 174, Washington, D. C.

MONEY IN PATENTS. PATENTS SECURED or fees returned. Booklets free. Send sketch for free search. P. H. Pattison & Company, U. S. Patent Attorneys, 425 Barrister Bldg., Washington, D. C.

PROTECTIVE PATENTS PROCURED promptly. 104 pg. Blue Book free. Trademarks registered. Robb & Robb, 248-252 Southern Building, Washington, D. C.

THE PATENTOME IS FREE. AN EDUCATION in obtaining patents. Established 1865. Anderson & Son, Attorneys, 713 7th St., Washington, D. C.

POULTRY

EGG-O-HATCH APPLIED TO EGGS DURING incubation strengthens the chick and weakens the shell. It supplies free oxygen, absorbs the carbon dioxide and rots the shell. Makes better hatches of stronger chicks. Booklet free. Sample, treats 100 eggs, 10 cents. Package, treats 600 eggs, 50 cents, postpaid. Geo. H. Lee Co., 539 Lee Bldg., Omaha, Neb.

NURSERY STOCK

J. H. HALE PEACH DELICIOUS APPLE. Northern grown, well rooted, free from disease, guaranteed to grow. Peach and apples $3.00 per 100 up. Roses 25c. Hydrangeas 25c. Dahlias $1 doz. Everbearing Strawberries 25c dozen. All the fruits, flowers, hedging. Catalogue free. Ask for it. Lake Shore Nurseries, Girard, Pa.

PORTRAITS

ENLARGED PORTRAITS HAND-PAINTED in life-like colors made from any photograph or snapshot. Large 14x20 picture only $1.95. Send no money until you see picture and are pleased. Mail in photo or send for particulars. Dept. 3, Art Studios, 11 Spruce Place, Minneapolis, Minn.

OLD COINS WANTED

$2 TO $500 EACH PAID FOR HUNDREDS of Coins. Keep all money dated before 1895 and send ten cents for new illustrated Coin Value Book, size 4x7. It may mean your fortune. Get posted. Clarke Coin Company, Box 70, Le Roy, N. Y.

MOTION PICTURE PLAYS

SEND US YOUR IDEAS FOR PHOTOPLAYS, Stories, etc. We accept them in any form—correct free—sell on commission. Big rewards! Make money. Get details now. Writer's Selling Service, 10 Main, Auburn, N. Y.

MOVING PICTURE BUSINESS

$35.00 PROFIT NIGHTLY. SMALL CAPITAL starts you. No experience needed. Our machines are used and endorsed by Government institutions. Catalog Free. Atlas Moving Picture Co., Franklin Bldg., Chicago.

AUTO TIRES AND TUBES

30X3 NONSKID GUARANTEED TIRE, $8.00; 30x3½ nonskid guaranteed tire, $10.00; 30x3 or 30x3½ Universal tube, $2.25. Terms—Cash 2%, or net C. O. D. Para Auto Tire Company, 1421 Michigan Av., Chicago.

UNDERGROUND TREASURES

UNDERGROUND TREASURES—HOW AND where to find them; particulars for stamp. Model Co., Morton Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

TRICKS, GAMES

BIG SCREAM: SAMPLE TRICKS, PUZZLES, magic—catalog 10c. Soudhan, A-415 Holland Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.

WISCONSIN FARM LANDS

LANDOLOGY, A MAGAZINE GIVING THE facts in regard to the land situation. Three months' subscription free. If for a home or as an investment you are thinking of buying good farm lands, simply write me a letter and say, "Mail me Landology and all particulars free." Address Editor, Landology, Skidmore Land Co., 34 Skidmore Bldg., Marinette, Wis.

GOVERNMENT LAND—ARKANSAS

FREE U. S. LAND, OIL AND MINERAL claims. Northwest Arkansas, 200,000 acres opened. Descriptive literature with State, township, elevation map, three colors—25c, or 60c includes year's subscription to Arkansas' Development Magazine, Traveler Magazine, Harrison, Ark.

FARM LANDS

FREE GOVERNMENT LANDS—OUR OFFICIAL 112 page book "Vacant Government Lands" lists and describes every acre in every county in U. S. Tells location, place to apply, how secured free. 1917 diagrams and tables, new laws, lists, etc. Price 25 cents postpaid. Webb Publishing Co. (Dept. 108), St. Paul, Minn.

FARM LANDS FOR SALE

VIRGINIA, N. C., W. VA., AND OHIO FARMS at $15.00 per acre and up offer big value for the price. Best climate, markets, schools and transportation. Good land and neighbors. Write F. H. LaBaume, Agrl. Agt., N. & W. Ry., 248 Arcade, Roanoke, Va.

MONTANA FARM LANDS

640 ACRE MONTANA HOMESTEADS—New law. Circular free. Bureau 6, Boulder, Montana.

PERSONAL

SUFFERERS FROM NERVOUS, WEAK, run down conditions should take Juven Pills. They accomplish marvelous results. This medicine has more rejuvenating, vitalizing force than has ever before been offered. Sent postpaid only on receipt of this advertisement and $1, by C. I. Hood Co., proprietors Hood's Sarsaparilla, Lowell, Mass. (Z.R.)

MEN ON THE DOWN GRADE, REMEMBER we cure varicocele, stricture, chronic, nervous, blood, kidney, bladder and private diseases. Book symptom blank and advice free, sealed. Hinze Medical Institute, 22 Washington Ave. So., Minneapolis, Minn.

MARRY RICH. BE HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS. Big list of descriptions and photos of congenial people with means free. Sealed, confidential. Either sex. Standard Club, Box 607, Grayslake, Ill.

MARRY — FREE PHOTOS, BEAUTIFUL ladies; descriptions and directory; pay when married. New Plan Co., Dept. 21, Kansas City, Mo.

MARRIAGE PAPER COMPLETE WITH photos, descriptions, names and addresses, 3 months for 25c. Wren, 44 Grand Rapids, Mich.

MARRY—MARRIAGE DIRECTORY WITH photos and description free. Pay when married. The Exchange, Dept. 28, Kansas City, Mo.

KOSMOS ASTROLOGICAL BIRTHDAYBOOK reveals the mysteries of your life. Postpaid 10 cents. Kosmos, 301 Home Bldg., Louisville, Ky.

REAL PHOTOS, CHARMING BEAUTIES, fascinating poses. Send dime for large sample and catalog. B. W. Shaw, 44 Boylston St., Boston.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN MATRIMONIALLY inclined, seek acquaintance, by correspondence, particulars (sealed) 4c. Midcontinent Star, Independence, Kansas.

SNAPPY POSTCARDS: BETTER THAN "September Morn," you will like them and want more; 4 for 15c. Smith's Nov., 2943 Wallace, Chicago.

MARRY IF LONELY; HUNDREDS RICH wish marriage; confidential; reliable; descriptions free. "The Successful Club," Box 556, Oakland, Calif.

MARRY RICH, DESCRIPTIONS SENT free. International, Box 959, Los Angeles, Cal.

REAL PHOTOS, FRENCH MODELS, CATALOGUE and sample 10c. Correspondent, 825 World Building, New York.

MARRY—10000 WORTH $100 TO $100000; paper 10c sealed. B. W. Love, Box 1616, Denver, Colo.

MARRIAGE PAPER WITH NAMES, ADDRESSES, photos, descriptions, 4 months, 25c. Box 2265 B, Boston, Mass.

MARRY RICH. HUNDREDS ANXIOUS TO marry. Descriptions and photos free. R. Unity, Grand Rapids, Mich.

GET MARRIED—BEST MATRIMONIAL PAPER published. Mailed free. The Correspondent, Toledo, Ohio.

MARRY—RICH FARMER, SEEKS MARRIAGE, ladies send description and photo in first letter. New Plan Co., Kansas City, Mo.

TOBACCO HABIT CURED BY HARMLESS receipt. Sent free. Superba Co., D1, Baltimore, Md.

DARE YOU ANSWER THIS — LONELY farmer, worth $90,000, will marry. "H." 57-4th Street, San Francisco.

WIDOW, 37, WORTH $95,000, VERY LONELY and anxious to marry. (B-20), Mission Unity, San Francisco.

CORRESPOND: MARRY—DESCRIPTIONS and addresses sealed, 12c. Henry Mallon, 2250 N. Kostner ave., Chicago.

HAVE SWEETHEARTS EVERYWHERE. Receive letters from everyplace. Membership 10c. Hoosier Club, Terre Haute, Indiana.

MOUNTED POLICE LIFE IN CANADA—A new book of criminal romance. By mail $1.62. Carl F. Marsh, Trenton, Nebr.

SELECTED DESCRIPTIONS, MOSTLY pretty Southern girls. Sent 4c. Sunny South Club, 926-E, Winston-Salem, N. C.

GET MARRIED; LARGE, HANDSOMELY illustrated matrimonial magazine mailed free. H. Jahn, St. Paul, Minn.

THE FAIRY CORNER

DO YOU KNOW HER?

I have a little friend who doesn't like to mend,
To dust, or set the table, or even make a bed;
The very thought of sweeping nearly sets her off a-weeping,
And she always goes about it as tho her feet were lead.

She "hates" to rock the baby, and says that some day, maybe,
She'll go away and linger where they have no babies 'round
To keep folks busy rocking—but really this is shocking,
And she doesn't mean a word of what she says, I will be bound.

'Tis true she cannot bear to even walk a square
To buy a spool of cotton, or stamps for mamma's mail,
And it's much against her wishes that she's set to washing dishes,
While to speak of darning stockings is enough to make her pale.

In fact, she wants to shirk everything resembling work,
And the only thing she does enjoy, so far as I can say,
Is to take her doll and book, and within some quiet nook
To read of elves and fairies, and dream the hours away.

❧

SHOPPING.

Mrs. Alligator gazed at her husband across the coffee cups. "Manuel," she began, doubtfully. Her husband put down his newspaper with a resigned sigh.

"Yes, Matilda," he said, "of course I'll get it for you. What is it?"

"It's a yard and three-quarters of pink-flowered chintz to finish my kimono," replied Mrs. Alligator, sweetly. "I'll give you the sample."

Mr. Alligator stirred his coffee viciously. "I hate matching samples!" he said. "I always get the wrong thing!"

"Nonsense!" said his wife, placidly. "Here's the sample, and all you have to do is to go to Gingham Brothers and ask them to give you a yard and three-quarters exactly like this. It's twenty-five cents a yard. You'd better run along quick. I hear the train whistle," and she helped him on with his overcoat.

As Mr. Alligator crawled dismally down the front path he said to himself, "I declare, that's just the trouble with living so far from the cities. I always have a hundred dozen things to get when I go to town. I declare, I think I'll spend next winter in a park zoo."

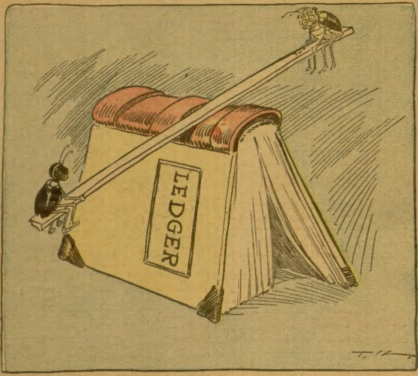
When he reached the station the train was already there, but he soon found a baggage car with the door invitingly open, and scuttled inside, for being only an alligator he wasn't allowed to ride in the parlor car. In fact, he wasn't allowed to ride even in the freight car, and so that's why he scuttled inside and hid in a dark corner till after the train had started. When it was well under way Manuel took off his coat, rolled it up into a pillow, and lay down on the floor. He always did this, and his wife often wondered how he got so many wrinkles in his coat. The darkness and the rocking motion of the train soon soothed him to sleep, and he was just dreaming that his wife insisted on making him an overcoat of blue-flowered chintz when the car stopped. The door was flung open and the conductor put in his head.

"Jiminy crickets!" exclaimed the conductor, when he saw Manuel fast asleep in the car, and he got a broom and poked at Manuel in a gingerly manner.

"Yard'n three-quarters of blue chintz like the sample," murmured Manuel drowsily, as he opened one eye. When he saw the conductor he opened the other eye in a hurry.

"Tickets, please!" cried the conductor. He always said that when he could not think of anything else to say. But the minute Manuel took one step toward him his presence of mind came back to him, and he turned and tore down the platform at full speed. Manuel was not used to being found in baggage cars, and so he tore down the platform in the other direction as hard as he could and hid trembling under a pile of strawberry crates.

The conductor would have been running yet if he had not accidentally bumped into an old lady with a green parrot in a large cage, who had come down to the station to meet her husband. This old lady was his mother-in-law, and tho he was afraid of alligators, he stopped to apologize.



Eddie Bug—"Bookkeeping is a cinch, Bill."
Bill Bug—"Sure! All you gotta do is get your balance."

"Why, William," said the old lady, "were you coming to greet me? It's nice to have you so fond of me, but don't be so impetuous next time. Have you seen my husband anywhere around? We're going shopping at Gingham Brothers. If you find him tell him I'll wait for him in the waiting-room," and the old lady picked up the parrot cage and trotted off. William did not have time to hunt for the old lady's husband, for just then the whistle blew and he had to jump on board.

When the station was quiet again Manuel crawled softly out from under the strawberry crates and made his way cautiously down the platform to the ticket office window.

"Please, Mr. Ticket Man," he said politely, "can you tell me the way to Gingham Brothers?" For Manuel had left the sample and the address his wife had given him in his coat pocket, and he had left his coat in the car.

Manuel was so close to the ground that the ticket man couldn't see him, and he thought it was a little boy who was speaking, and so he said: "You see that old gentleman going down the street there, sonny? He's going to Gingham Brothers'. You just follow him."

"Thank you, kindly," said Manuel, and he ambled off after the gentleman. Now, this gentleman was Mr. Bangs, and he was the husband of the lady with the parrot, and he had not been able to find either of them; so he was going to Gingham Brothers' to wait for them there. As he turned the corner he looked back and saw Manuel crawling gracefully after him.

"Wait a minute," called Manuel; "I want you." Mr. Bangs did not wait. On the contrary, he walked faster than before. So did Manuel, and by the time Mr. Bangs got to the next corner and looked back Manuel was nearer than ever. Then Mr. Bangs began to run; and so did Manuel. He ran and ran and he ran; and so did Manuel. He turned up one street and down another and he ran crisscross and zigzag and doubled on his tracks; and so did Manuel.

Just then Manuel heard a shrill voice behind him crying, "Tickets, please! Tickets, please! Tickets, please!"

"It's that conductor!" thought Manuel with a shiver.

But it wasn't. It was the old lady's parrot, who was being so severely shaken up and down in his large cage that he thought he was on a train. The reason he was being shaken up and down was that Mrs. Bangs, who was holding the cage, was running after Manuel as fast as she could. She had come out of the waiting-room just in time to see Manuel start off in pursuit of her husband, and she had been running after them ever since.

At last Mr. Bangs saw a crowd of people ahead of him. "I'll get lost in the crowd," he thought, and he ran in among them and crisscrossed and zigzagged and doubled on his tracks, but it was all of no use. Manuel had his eye on him. The crowd scattered quickly, and Mr. Bangs was left with a clear road ahead of him. On and on he ran, till at last he came to his own house and turned in at the gate. The front door was locked and so he ran around to the back, but the back door was locked, and as he saw Manuel's nose appearing around the corner of the house, he ran around to the front again, and scrambled up into the big apple tree.

Manuel, quite out of breath, crawled up to the foot.

"Come down, please," he panted, "I'm in a hurry."

"I won't," said Mr. Bangs firmly, and he climbed higher.

"Well then, will you please tell me the way to Gingham Brothers'?" said Manuel, "because I've got to match some chintz for my wife's kimono and I'm in a hurry. There's a conductor coming after me for ticket and I haven't any."

"Is that what you've been running after me for?" demanded Mr. Bangs, angrily.

"Tickets, please! Tickets, please! Tickets, please!" cried the parrot.

Manuel turned at bay. "Is that what I've been running away from?" he cried indignantly, when he saw his parrot.

"Go away from my front yard!" said Mrs. Bangs, severely. "How dare you chase my husband up a tree?"

"I was just going," said Manuel. "Can you please tell me where Gingham Brothers' is?"

"Just around the corner," answered Mrs. Bangs, and Manuel thanked her, and made off as fast as he could.

When he got there he could not remember if his wife had said pink or blue chintz, but he rather thought it was blue. And he bought ten yards of it, because he did not remember how much he was to get. When he came home that evening and showed it to his wife she just looked at him and said "Manuel!" and when she heard he had left his overcoat on the train she insisted on making him a new one out of the blue chintz; so Manuel's dream came true.

❧

THE VICTIM RETALIATED.

A young lady had coquetted until the victim was completely exhausted. He rose to go away. She whispered as she accompanied him to the door, "I shall be at home next Sunday evening."

"So shall I," he replied.

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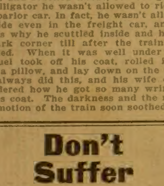

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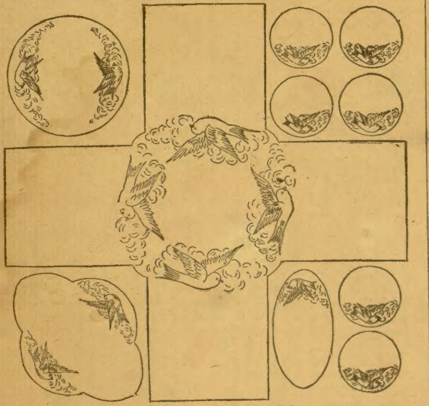

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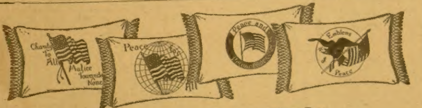
NO. 5067, BLUEBIRD LUNCHEON SET.—Every housekeeper knows how valuable is her collection of table linens. If one has to purchase these dainty linens completed they become a luxury which few of us could afford. But this design is quite simple and costs very little to embroider. This luncheon set consists of a lunch cloth, 34x34 inches; centerpiece, 11x11 inches; six doilies, 6x6 inches; tray cloth, 12x15 inches; and platter cloth, 6x12 inches, all of which are stamped in blue or white linen. We also include six skeins of embroidery floss in this offer. This complete set will be given for $1.50 in subscriptions to the Blade and the Ledger.



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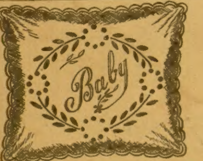

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NO. 1713, BABY PILLOW—The design is stamped on 16x18-inch white lawn, and enough material is included for back; also three skeins of floss for working design. Given for $1.00 in subscriptions, new or renewal, to the Blade and the Ledger.

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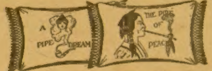

Nos. 5061 and 5062, Smoker Pillow Tops.

* * *

Defenseless.

The poor, weeping woman stood in the dock and the sympathies of the spectators went out to her. She looked muscular, but so miserable.

"You are charged," said the magistrate, sternly but kindly, "with assaulting your husband."

Gulping down her sobs, the prisoner wiped away her tears with a brawny hand and replied, sadly:

"Yes, your worship. I only asked the brute if he would ever cease to love me and he was so long in answering that I hit him in the eye with a broom. I'm only a defenseless woman," she went on in a broken voice, "and a woman's life without love is a mere blight."

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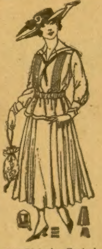

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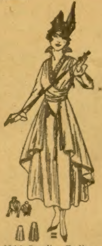
9266-A Fancy Bags, One size.



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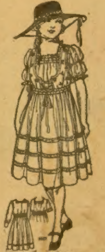

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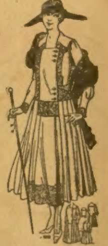

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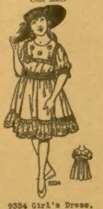

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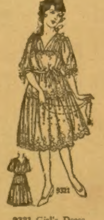

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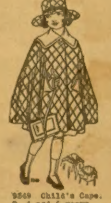

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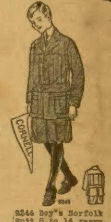

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If you wish any pattern from those advertised in this issue, mark the number and size on the margin and we will retain a coupon for each pattern we send you when we send you the Coupon Book. (Order by size and number.) **Coupons good for six months.**

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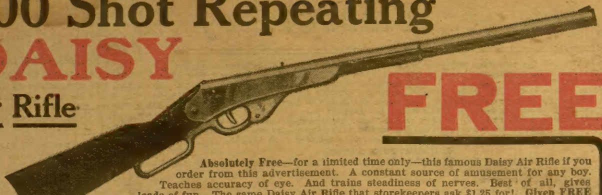

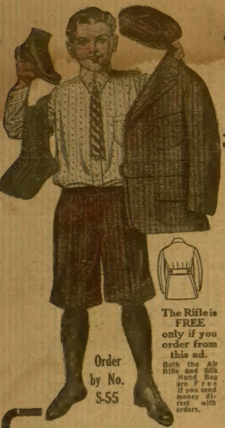

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FREE

If you order any one of These Three Bargains from this ad.

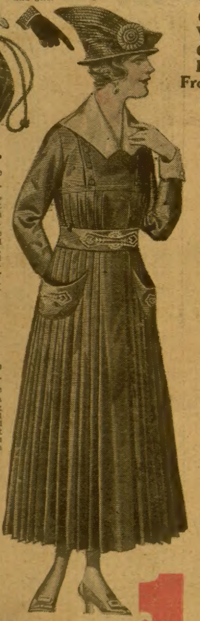
The manufacturers are anxious that we push these three articles before any others. They feel they are the best on the market, and in order to introduce them throughout the country, they are giving free with each garment that we sell from this ad a handsome silk bag. These bags are made of the finest silk poplin, in pouch shape, enhanced by multi-colored sea beads in unique design. The bags are lined with mercerized silk and are furnished with a vanity mirror. Remember, this bag is absolutely free **if you order from this ad.** However, you must act quick. This offer is limited. Send the coupon today—NOW!

On Credit

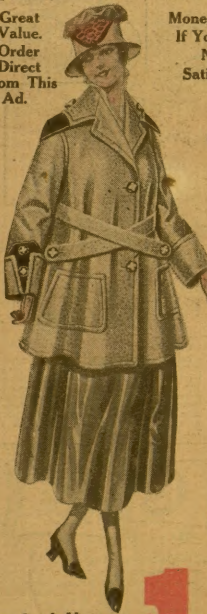
Pay in small monthly sums. No need to pay all down. We trust honest people everywhere. Only $1 down and you can have the Boys' 8-piece Outfit, Ladies' White Chinchilla Coat, the Silk Dress or Taffeta Skirt. That beats paying all down. See the beautiful workmanship, the excellent material used and the latest style. Truly bargains of great value. Only $1 brings either to you if you order now. And remember if you order from this ad the bag is free.

Send Coupon

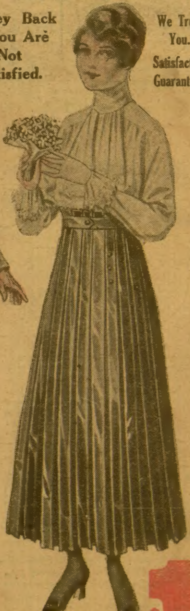
Thousands will be sending for these bargains. It will be first come first served. Get your order in now. Send the coupon with $1 P. O. order. Remember, the Silk Bag is free. Also get our Bargain Bulletins of men's, women's and children's clothing on credit. Write today while this offer is on. Send the coupon today—now.



Great Value. Order Direct From This Ad.



Money Back If You Are Not Satisfied.



We Trust You. Satisfaction Guaranteed.

ELMER RICHARDS CO.,
Dept. 1293, W. 35th St., Chicago

☐ Send the 8-piece Boys' Outfit No. S-55
☐ Send the Silk Poplin Dress No. S-34
☐ Send the White Chinchilla Coat No. S-32
☐ Send the Taffeta Silk Skirt No. S-36

I enclose $..............as first payment. To be returned if I am not satisfied and send merchandise back. Otherwise I will pay advertised terms.

Name ....

Address ....

Post Office..............................State..........

If you only want the Bargain Bulletin put X here ☐

SPECIAL. *Order direct from this ad.*

$1 Send Us And we will send you this Handsome Smart Dress.

This pretty model is made of the finest grade of susquehanna silk poplin, a material well known for its beauty and service-giving qualities. The special feature is the fact that the dress is pleated all-around in both front and back. The collar and cuffs are of white silk poplin in striking contrast to the rest of the garment. The pretty belt as well as side pockets are richly embroidered with silk and gold colored threads. Furnished in navy blue, black and copenhagen. Sizes 16 to 20 and 34 to 44. **No. S-34. Price $10.95. $1.00 cash, $1.70 monthly.**

Send Us $1 and we will send you this Genuine White Chinchilla Coat

White Chinchillas will be very popular, and this stunning model is made of a special grade of white Manhattan Chinchilla. Made in flaring style with double cross belts in front of self material. The large collar as well as unique cuffs are inlaid with black velvet. Finished with two large patch pockets. Coat is unlined, but all seams are carefully bound. White only. Sizes 16 to 20 and 34 to 44. **No. S-32, Price $9.95.** $1.00 cash, $1.50 monthly.

A Rare Bargain. Send Us $1 and we will send you this Dressy Taffeta Silk Skirt.

This skirt won first prize at the Eastern Style Show and is a model becoming to all types of women. The material used is a special fine grade of black taffeta. The special feature of this style is the fact that it is made with box pleats around the entire garment. At the waistline there is a narrow belt of self material, above which there is a new ruffle effect. Skirt is trimmed in front with several small self-covered buttons. Furnished in black taffeta only. Belt sizes 22 to 30. Length 36 to 43. Hips not over 47. **No. S-36, Price $7.95.** $1.00 cash, $1.20 monthly.

This Is a Special Limited Offer

YES—As a special introductory offer we were able to arrange with the manufacturers to allow us to give the beautiful Silk Handbag free to any person ordering one of the three above bargains from this ad. Our supply of bags is limited, so get your orders in today.

ELMER RICHARDS CO., Dept. 1293, West 35th Street, Chicago, Illinois